



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

HOME ECONOMICS

SUMMER 2012

Statistical Information

The Examiner's Report may refer in general terms to statistical outcomes. Statistical information on candidates' performances in all examination components (whether internally or externally assessed) is provided when results are issued.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

HOME ECONOMICS (FOOD & NUTRITION)

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Summer 2012

Chief Examiner: Bethan Jones

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
1	3,434	80	39.3
2	3,542	120	81.8

N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.

UNIT 1 – Theory Paper

- Q.1 The majority of candidates gained full marks for this question. Those who did not gain 3 marks gave an incorrect response to part (ii) of the question.
- Q.2 (a) The majority of candidates correctly identified the staple foods. Where the answer was incorrect, carrots was given as an example.
- (b) A wide variety of rice was stated displaying a range of cultures and personal choice. Dishes suggested were similarly very diverse illustrating good uses of Patna, Basmati, Thai fragrant, Jasmine, Wholegrain and Arborio. Credit was not given to suggesting brands of rice e.g. Uncle Ben or where there was repetition of a named dish for different types of rice.
- Q.3 (a) Well answered, the most popular nutrient correctly named as protein, calcium or fat.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to suggest desirable qualities for choice of cheese for making a pizza, the most common being a prominent flavour, the melting properties, the ability to improve appearance. Candidates were not familiar with the choice of cheese for cheesecake making, many making incorrect references to the cooking properties. Correct responses included the creaminess, texture, blandness and ease of mixing, cream cheese being a popular suggestion.
- Q.4 (a) Many candidates scored full marks reflecting good basic knowledge of basic pastry making. References were made to correct proportions of ingredients, cold temperatures, correct process and techniques. Whereas answers should be confined to the making of the pastry, many candidates lost marks through describing the cooking of the pastry and some were obviously confusing pastry making with yeast mixtures by referring to the importance of kneading thoroughly and stretching the dough.

- (b) The majority of candidates were able to apply knowledge giving examples of ready-made, ready rolled, packet mixes and quicker methods of pastry making such as one stage and using a food processor. Suggestions such as getting family members to help and using tinned fillings were not accepted.
- Q.5 (a) Most candidates were able to access full marks by stating conduction, convection and radiation. Many referred to methods of cooking and were consequently unable to access marks.
- (b) This was a criteria reference question which was attempted by most candidates but which, unfortunately, many responses lacked specific application of knowledge. Good answers referred to the heat being situated at the top and radiating direct heat on to the chop. The thickness of the chop was referred to as well as the need to turn or 'flip' the chop. Many candidates scored 1 or 2 marks by identifying radiation as the method of heat transfer and that the grill gets red hot. Some responses referred to a contact grill and correctly described the conduction of heat, the even cooking, sealing of outside and the importance of an even thickness for thorough cooking.
- (c) This part of the question caused problems for many candidates who did not recognise the term 'marinade' prior to cooking food. Many used their common sense and imagination and accessed 1 or 2 marks for stating that it provided flavour and colour. Candidates who accessed more marks correctly described the tenderising effect, the change in texture and that it prevents burning. A few candidates also gave correct examples of marinades describing the role of the ingredients in the tenderising process.
- Q.6 (a) Well answered, the most popular response being for growth and the repair of body cells. A secondary source of energy featured as the least popular function.
- (b) Answers varied considerably in quality. Few candidates scored full marks identifying the HBV and LBV proteins, reference to amino acids complementing each other to produce the necessary balance of essential and non-essential with good specific examples of how to match the protein foods for good effect. Cost also features in good answers. Candidates scoring half marks or below gave basic responses and usually described the functions of protein generally with little reference to the complementary action.
- Q.7 (a)&(b) This was a basic nutrition question which should have given candidates easy access to 2 marks. Sadly too many candidates gave incorrect answers, many naming foods which, occasionally, did not even contain the vitamin in question.
- (c) Most candidates suggested steaming as a better method of cooking for retention of water soluble vitamins. Few explained that the method kept the broccoli free from contact with water. Many referred to even size of broccoli, preparing just before cooking, cooking for a short time to retain vitamins and texture. The weaker candidates gave vague answers, describing the cooking method without specific reference to vitamin loss.

- Q.8 (a) The majority of candidates scored the maximum of 2 marks. Yeast and mould were the most popular correct answers. Enzymes was also popular but incorrect.
- (b) A well answered question reflecting basic food hygiene and safety awareness. Popular correct answers were time, temperature and moisture, with ph and oxygen featuring regularly.
- (c) Although many candidates succeeded in accessing a few marks, the responses were generally disappointing because candidates did not pick up on the named foods in the question. The majority of candidates made some reference to buying, preparation and cooking of the chicken, few candidates highlighted the dangers of reheating rice and fewer candidates made reference to the potential danger of eggs in the Chocolate Mousse. On average, candidates scored half marks or below for general answers covering general hygiene rules of personal hygiene and the importance of using colour coded knives and chopping boards. Those few candidates who scored 6 marks or above focussed specifically on the high risk ingredients with in-depth references to storage and core cooking temperatures, and possible reheating temperatures for the curry.
- Q.9 There was evidence of detailed application of knowledge regarding nutrition and the promotion of a healthy diet which gave the majority of candidates 4 marks. Promotion of a healthy lifestyle was the weaker aspect and the majority of candidates' answers fell short of the balance required in the promotion leaflet. A few candidates, mostly those accessing high marks mentioned the implications of not following a healthy diet and lifestyle.
- Q.10 (a) The most popular choice. A range of packaging materials were generally discussed, mostly glass, tin and plastic. High scoring marks were accessed by candidates who described functions and suitability of a range of food packaging materials. Many candidates wrote in detail on vacuum packing which essentially is a form of plastic. Labelling was very well addressed with good discursive comments on the usefulness or otherwise of the information.
- (b) This question, the least popular was either very well answered or extremely weak. Very few candidates addressed ethical, organic, functional and GM foods but those who did provided mature and succinct reasoning with specific references to consumer choice, making educated decisions, informed choices. Nutritional benefits, moral issues, cost factor, environmental issues and religious beliefs all underpinned the good responses and it made excellent reading. Many candidates read ethical as ethnical. Answers contained correct information on the topic but unfortunately failed to give them access to marks.

Conclusion

This was the first year for scripts to be scanned and electronically marked. For many of the examiners, this was a new experience and a learning curve. It has reinforced the importance of clarity of legibility of handwriting, and where candidates use continuation sheets for their responses, that they indicate clearly number of question and/or part of a question. The new layout of a one tier paper resulted in fewer candidates accessing low marks. The majority were able to attempt all the questions and able to gain some marks consistently from beginning to end. There is an obvious variety in quality of teaching; many candidates are disadvantaged by ineffective teaching on basic Food and Nutrition topics, whilst other candidates are able to access high marks through a broad and balanced approach to a wide variety of topics.

Examination technique continues to improve but needs more focus on the underlining of key words to help extend answers, particularly in criterion referenced questions. Questions which require candidates to explain, discuss, assess or evaluate are criterion referenced which requires extended writing techniques. Responses which are, in the main, lists will only give candidates access to a small proportion of the total mark for that question or part of the question. There needs to be further development of a point made with specific examples and/or relevant reasoning to show depth of understanding and application of knowledge.

UNIT 2 – Controlled Assessment Tasks

Administration

This was the first year centres were required to enter their Internally Assessed marks onto a web-page on the WJEC's secure website. Centres were then notified of the sample requested and the same candidates' work for Tasks 1 and 2 submitted for moderation. FN1, FN2, FN3 and composite FN4 sheets were required with samples sent for moderation. Although the new electronic system enables moderators to access the whole cohorts total marks, these forms assist the moderation process by giving a clear overview of any issues relating to strengths and weaknesses on particular aspects of the Controlled Assessment and for reporting to individual centres.

The booklet on instructions for conduct and administration of examinations, is only available on line. It contains all the information required for completing the required paper work.

It is essential that centres familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria and, where more than one teacher is involved in the delivery of the specification, **internal moderation must take place within the centre**. The Conduct and Administration booklet clearly stipulates this and where centres were guilty of this discrepancy, it was noted in the moderator's report.

Some scaling of centre coursework marks took place again this year; teachers need to re-visit the specification criteria and, in particular, check total mark awarded against the performance criteria for each grade.

Please note that only whole marks are acceptable; fractional marks are not allowed.

Samples sent for moderation do not required elaborate and cumbersome folders which make the packaging expensive. Plastic sacks supplied by WJEC are sufficiently robust for safe and secure delivery. Work should be clearly identified and candidates' coversheets included with individual work, but not attached, as they are removed during the moderation process.

Task 1

Investigation and planning

Many centres produced exemplar work where candidates had been given adequate guidance for completing a succinct investigation, which was focussed and relevant to the task chosen. To access the higher mark bands, candidates need to show understanding of the brief with evidence of individual interpretation. Copy and paste does not show understanding and should be discouraged. Highlighting key words adds focus to the task and also keeps candidates 'on task'.

Examples of good practice included reference to primary research, exploration of ideas for practical work based on the topic and setting success criteria and/or clear aims which often included nutritional and sensory aspects. Analysis of dishes chosen needs to be linked to the initial aims or success criteria set to make work meaningful. Many centres fail to comply with the assessment criteria on the specification, which clearly indicates the need to apply knowledge and understanding to choice of dishes and justification of final choice.

Planning for all practical assessment is essential and an integral part of the assessment criteria. This is good practice for candidates in preparation for the practical outcome. It is essential to include planning for one practical session as part of the folio work for assessment. To access the higher mark bands, candidates need to show detailed planning with evidence of sequencing or 'dovetailing' of tasks and accurate application of hygiene and safety, not simply a generic list of hygiene and safety points, which may not all apply to the specific task in hand.

Centres need to maximise on the time allocation for practical assessment and encourage candidates to make more than one dish in one session. This will help develop multi-tasking skills and enable the better candidates to access the high mark band for practical work. There was evidence of centres not giving candidates this challenge. Where centres, for example, have a time allocation of 80 minutes, candidates should demonstrate and accomplish the making of two dishes. It is vital to use the whole range of marks for this section of the Controlled Assessment and teachers need to bear this in mind when marking candidates' work.

Practical outcome

Photographic evidence indicates an overall high quality of practical work although, again, as mentioned in last year's report, many centres appear to mark this section generously. The mark should reflect the degree of practical skills shown and the candidates' ability to **plan efficiently and execute the plan effectively**. Although there were many examples of well executed practical work with high quality finish, there are major concerns about over generous awarding of marks where it is evident from photographs that candidates do not meet the assessment criteria. Teachers need to use the range of marks available for practical and base their assessment on the **degree of skills level, the consistency and quality of competent food preparation and cooking skills**. Marks in the top band should be awarded only to candidates who present dishes to an **excellent quality finish**.

Candidates who display a restricted or limited level of skills should be assessed accordingly, to distinguish between the grade descriptor range.

Evaluation

Evaluations should be limited to nutrition, sensory and possibly cost. It is only necessary to evaluate dishes for one practical session, i.e. minimum of two dishes. To access the higher mark bands in this section, candidates need to analyse their findings for the sensory and nutritional aspects of the dishes and arrive at a specific conclusion. The nutritional data tend to include a blanket statement rather than identifying the ingredient, e.g. pizza contains vitamin C rather than the pepper in the pizza contains vitamin C. Encourage candidates to apply this in-depth approach to access higher marks.

Task 2

Interpretation and investigation

There were many examples of candidates adopting excellent research methods and variety of approaches to tasks. Primary research, e.g. questionnaires, needs to be meaningful, specific and relevant to task; all too often it is conducted as a standalone exercise to simply 'tick a box'. Questionnaires should always include results and a conclusion which is used to reach the next decision. If target groups are identified on the first page then there should be further focus on the group as the work develops. This adds strength to the understanding and gives the work more depth.

Development of ideas

There was an obvious improvement in this section. Many centres had acted upon the moderator's report from last year and focussed on candidates adopting an experimental approach to dishes with good results enabling decisions to be taken and justified. In order to access the higher mark bands for this section, there should be a clear pathway to justifying the selection and rejection of ideas for practical work. **It is not an opportunity for a trial run of the practical assessment. These practice sessions can be carried out, if necessary, as part of normal teaching. They do not need to be evidenced in the folio work. Recipe trialling does not meet the grade assessment criteria.** Candidates show evidence of brainstorming ideas for practical but all too often opportunities for development are lost. There is a wealth of information on nutrition, sensory and cost which candidates can draw upon from such developmental work to support decisions for final choice. Centres that accessed high marks in this section showed evidence of possible recipe trials with modification of ingredients, experimental work, comparisons of commercial and home-made dishes and an investigative approach to ideas for practical work. Choice was well justified with realistic and achievable conclusion. Good use was made of criteria charts which aid decision making and assist in the justification of choices.

Planning

Planning continues to improve, many centres provide candidates with templates. As there is increased weighting of marks for practical work, the better candidates need to be given the opportunity to display high level preparation and cooking skills. Time should be devoted to this element in order to enable candidates to demonstrate their practical capability. Marks in the higher mark band should only be awarded to candidates who display the skills of logical sequencing. Centres need to show clearly how time has been allocated for practical assessment, either in candidates' time plans/logs or in the teacher's annotation.

Practical outcome

Assessment should reflect the range of marks according to skills level and candidates' ability to complete the task in the time allocation. High marks should be awarded only to candidates who meet all the assessment criteria and work independently, i.e. display excellent manipulation, a fine level of dexterity, who work in a consistently safe and hygienic manner with high quality finish. There was evidence in many centres of an excellent standard of high level skills appropriately and aesthetically presented.

There is, however, a real concern over generous marking of practical work. Teachers need to revisit the assessment criteria and look critically at the five assessment objectives for practical outcome. Very often the quantity and quality of practical work does not support the high marks awarded. In several instances high marks were awarded to candidates whose planning did not show any form of sequencing. Similarly, high marks are being awarded to candidates who display, albeit competent, low level skills, e.g. 43 marks for making a fruit salad, a stir fry and a milk shake. In order to maintain standards, marks awarded must be justified, covering the whole range, according to the ability of candidates.

The practical element constitutes over half the total mark for Task 2. There should, therefore, be the required time allocation on the centre calendar devoted to the practical assessment for Food and Nutrition. This will give all candidates the opportunity to display the higher level skills required to meet the assessment criteria and give recognition to the weighting of marks identified on the specification.

This issue was discussed at length at this year's Awarding meeting. Centre marks for practical outcome will in future need to be adjusted where the photographic and folio evidence does not justify the high mark awarded. Teachers will, therefore, need to be particularly careful next year in the light of this growing concern over generous practical marks.

Credit must be given to the many centres who teach sound and competent levels of food preparation and practical skills as supported by photographic evidence accompanying the work. Thank you to the teachers whose practical marks are consistently fair and accurate on this element of the specification.

Evaluation

There is evidence of some excellent practice in centres with candidates evaluating work competently and in detail, often as an on-going process.

Whole task evaluation is improving with more candidates addressing suggestions for improvements and proposals for further developments in order to access the higher mark bands. Ideally, candidates need to reflect on aims set and evaluate their success in accomplishing those aims. There were particularly good examples of individual, whole task honest evaluations where critical thinking featured throughout the task. With some guidance from teachers, the weaker ability candidates can be channelled into constructing a minimum number of sentences to cover the assessment criteria thus giving them access to higher marks.

Nutritional analysis and sensory analyses need to have supportive comments to show understanding. Mechanical exercises such as printing out copious sheets of nutritional analysis for several dishes is meaningless without evidence of understanding. This does not constitute good evaluation technique.

General comments

- Many centres are giving excellent guidance to candidates as evidenced by the complementary support material sent with samples.
- The quality of photographic evidence varies – it should accompany the candidates' work, attached and clearly labelled. Inserting candidates' name on photographs on their practical outcome is useful. Photographs of the four dishes produced for Task 1 and the practical assessment for Task 2 need to accompany candidates' work.
- Centres need to adhere to the maximum 8 sides of A4 for Task 1 and maximum 8 sides of A3 (or equivalent) for Task 2.
- Teacher annotation is very desirable for all elements of both Tasks, as this justifies the mark awarded and greatly assists in the moderation process.
- Use of specialist terminology needs to be reinforced. Candidates should be familiar with subject specific words as this forms part of the assessment criteria on the specification.
- FN1, FN2 and FN4 forms should be completed in candidates' numerical order.
- The subject is incorrectly referred to as Food Technology which implies delivery of a different focus, content and assessment criteria.
- Candidates need to be encouraged to assemble their work in order and correct sequence. Ensure that folio work is well presented, checked for errors and secured.

Conclusion

I wish to thank teachers for preparing candidates for the demands and challenges of the subject and congratulate candidates on their achievements. The increasing numbers in uptake is testimony to the growing popularity of the subject. It is a worthwhile course and is good preparation and foundation for many Key Stage 5 and higher education courses.

Again this year, I wish to thank my team of moderators and examiners for their hard work and consistently high standard. Support and advice is readily available from the subject officer and I wish to thank Allison Candy for her dedication and commitment to the subject and for her personal attention at all times.

As this will be my final report as Chief Examiner, I wish teachers of the subject every success in the future. On a personal note, it has been a pleasure to play a small part in the development of the subject over the years and to meet so many inspirational teachers at CPD. The responsibility has brought its challenges, but it has mostly been an extremely rewarding and satisfying one with very many fond memories. Thank you.

HOME ECONOMICS (TEXTILES)
General Certificate of Secondary Education
Summer 2012

Chief Examiner: Margaret Hopkins

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
1	455	80	36.8
2	478	120	82.7

N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.

General comments

Once again, it was most encouraging to see an increase in the number of centres and candidates opting for the subject. Since CPD last year, considerable interest has been shown in the new specification and it is hoped that even more centres will be joining us next year.

A series of CPD courses have again been arranged for the Autumn term to help and assist in the delivery of the subject specification. Teachers should refer to the WJEC website for further details and booking procedures. Thank you.

UNIT 1 – Theory Paper

- Q.1 (a) Unproblematic – candidates were very familiar with basic textile information.
(b) This was well answered on the whole.
- Q.2 Very well answered by the majority of candidates. A popular question.
- Q.3 Most candidates were able to answer 3 (i) but the majority of candidates did not know the name of the garment or country for 3 (ii) – many candidates thought the country was China.
- Q.4 (a) A disappointing response with very few candidates naming all four correct embroidery stitches.
(b) A pleasing response to this question with most candidates able to design a simple motif in colour suitable for a child's garment. A minority of candidates did not read the question correctly and chose to design a simple border on a child's garment or even to design a whole child's garment.
(c) This question was well answered with most candidates very much aware of the popularity of machine embroidery. The majority of candidates were able to mention the link to industry and included CAD/CAM in their response.

- Q.5 A disappointing response to this very straightforward question. The majority of candidates wrote about Laura Ashley or William Morris. Many candidates did not read the question correctly and chose to write about their favourite fashion designer. Some candidates did not even attempt the question. Only a few candidates answered the question correctly and those tended to concentrate on one or two points and continued to repeat the same point over and over.
- Q.6 (a) Again, some candidates did not read the question correctly. Some candidates gave lists of items of clothing needed for the trip instead of the information needed to decide what to take on the trip. A disappointing response.
- (b) This was a popular question and the diagrams/sketches submitted varied considerably in execution. The majority of candidates produced original design ideas making full use of colour and detail. It is in this type of question that the use of coloured crayons should be encouraged to aid the quality of their response. There was limited annotation in some cases and many candidates failed to mention the main design features. Candidates must mention the suitability of certain fabrics when annotating their designs, i.e. goretex for waterproof clothing. This question was misinterpreted by a small number of candidates – they designed a series of different garments/outfits, not just one item.
- (c) Generally well answered.
- (d) A very mixed response to this question. Generally, candidates had some knowledge of the development of new fabrics and were able to discuss the use of new fabrics for performance clothing. Relevant examples were given which highlighted the fact that candidates and teachers are keeping up with the latest technology, i.e. photochromic, thermochromic, kelvar etc. Blends and finishes were often mentioned. Lycra was often chosen for the new fabric, but lycra plus another fibre was needed.
- Q.7 (a) Generally a well answered question with very good detail on the sources of information available to the consumer when making an informed choice when buying a computerised sewing machine. Some candidates did not read the question correctly and discussed at length the points to look for when buying a computerised sewing machine, i.e. size, weight, price etc.
- (b) This question was generally not well answered. Candidates did not fully understand the issues involved in the question and proceeded to write their answers all about the methods of buying goods, i.e. cash, debit cards etc. There were few references made to the different types of credit arrangements. Only a few candidates mentioned paying monthly but did not relate this to interest charges or the dangers of getting into debt. Some candidates mentioned buying from catalogues but failed to discuss the important issues at length.
- Q.8 (a) This was by far the most popular choice of question and was answered quite well by the majority of candidates. Some candidates discussed at length the points and issues involved in some people becoming fashion victims but were not always able to assess the reasons why. This is obviously an area that teenagers are interested in and this was reflected in the quality of the response. Many candidates mentioned peer groups, celebrities, the effects of

advertising, role models etc. The influence of other cultures was discussed quite sensibly with good examples. Most candidates were aware of the influence of religion – this was well documented and in some cases good explanations given, indicating knowledge and understanding of the topic. Bullying was also mentioned, especially in relation to different brands and schoolwear. The responses made very interesting reading and it was a pleasure to see evidence of planning, structure and understanding in their responses.

- (b) The least popular choice with only a few candidates attempting to discuss the importance of the role of texture in relation to the design of clothing and household items. Some candidates did not understand the meaning of the term “texture” or how it related to the elements of design. Many candidates were able to mention soft and fluffy but that was the full extent of their knowledge. This was a disappointing response with candidates losing valuable marks for poor interpretation of the question and lack of knowledge.

Conclusion

Candidates need further practise in examination technique and the ability to read questions accurately and relate their answers to the marks available. Candidates should also be encouraged and reminded to relate their written work to the practical work covered during the two year course. Several weaker candidates still appear unable to make this transition of knowledge.

UNIT 2 – Controlled Assessments

Administration

It was disappointing to note, that not all of the work arrived on time this year. It is vital that all work arrives on time in order to ensure the smooth running of the moderation process – all work must be sent to WJEC by the specified date. Please see the Administration Booklet published on the WJEC website for clarification of this date. Thank you.

Most of the work sent was carefully packed, but one of the containers used by one centre was damaged during transit – fortunately none of the enclosed items were damaged. It would be appreciated if candidates could be advised to choose items that are suitable for packing and posting, e.g. cushion/quilt covers and bean bags may be sent without the fillings to save on postage costs! It would be acceptable to include photographs of the stuffed items in the design folios, so that the moderator is able to view the finished effect – the work can be assessed just as well!

Individual work was not always clearly labelled with centre number, candidate number and task number. Labels need to be attached securely to all practical work and all folder work needs to be clearly identified.

In most instances paperwork had been correctly completed but please note that both the TX1 and the TX2 forms need to be completed in rank order – this rank order may be different for both tasks.

Please ensure that all areas of the coursework are totalled correctly. Thank you.

It is also important to remember that candidates signatures are required on the TX3 forms, to certify that the work is all their own, and the time log must also be completed.

It is helpful at moderation when Task 1 and Task 2 are packed separately – this was usually done. Thank you.

Sample size changes were adopted by most centres - please refer to the current Administration Booklet on the WJEC website for the correct sample size. It would also be helpful if those candidates in the moderation sample could be marked with an asterisk on the TX1 and the TX2 forms to help with identification, and if TX4 could be completed and accompany the work.

Most centres did provide clear annotation of the controlled tasks, but not always – it is important at moderation, that the moderator can see how and why marks have been awarded and which skills assessed in practical items. On the whole, teacher comments and annotation were both helpful and realistic – thank you.

Task 1

Folio

It was encouraging to see that on the whole most centres' approach to the utilisation of the ten hours for this task was more realistic and achievable for all candidates.

Most candidates displayed a far better approach to the editing of folios, i.e. including only relevant information within the 4 page limit of Task 1. The limit of four sides of A3 is a skill which can be fostered to select and reject relevant material at the same time as utilising the space effectively – paper flaps and add-ons should be avoided. Candidates should be guided not to use additional illustrations with no annotation – candidates need to refine their research. Folios varied considerably according to the interests of the candidates, but in most cases the new folio format was well received.

On the whole, candidates showed a clear understanding of the requirements of their chosen task. It would be advantageous for candidates to write out their chosen brief at the onset of the task and include a realistic set of aims to demonstrate their understanding of the task and their organisational skills in order to access the higher mark bands.

Folios often contained research and information of a very high standard and were very well presented. Most candidates carried out relevant and meaningful investigation into techniques, with sound justifications for final choice.

In the majority of cases the folio pages were formatted well allowing candidates to achieve pleasing investigative ideas. On the whole, the folios were well-structured allowing the candidates to gain marks in all sections of the marking criteria. Most folios were well organised and followed the set criteria for assessment.

Candidates should be encouraged to show a variety of small practical technique samples, particularly on Page 1 of their folios. In some cases, these samples were too large and tended to restrict the information and investigation work allocated for that page. More emphasis is required on experimental work, the results of which should be relevant to the selection and rejection of choice ideas.

Inevitably, some folios were sparse with no real evidence of investigation work and design ideas with the chosen solution often stated within the first sentence or two of their folio work. Design ideas should show more development before the final design is chosen. Within the exploration section of the folio it is not essential to design more than one type of item, e.g. cushions/bags etc.

Please note that the Task 1 folio does not require a plan of action sheet, due to this section of the controlled assessment being concerned only with the application of skills.

Evaluations were generally well written, especially where candidates have been given detailed guidance to encapsulate all the assessment criteria. The best evaluations were written under sub-headings, where they were tackled in more detail. It would be of benefit to some candidates if strengths and weaknesses and further developments were addressed to extend the evaluation. Star analysis as part of the evaluation is often a good idea, but an explanation is also needed.

Many candidates are now using ICT opportunities to enhance presentation. It is pleasing to see the innovative use of ICT, but it is not essential in a timed controlled situation. As long as the folio work is clear, legible and in a logical order, hand written does not hinder in any way the candidates accessing the full range of marks available.

Realisation

A wide range of artefacts was submitted for moderation . Many were very original, attractive and innovative, while others followed a more “safe” approach. A range of outcomes were achieved resulting from clear folio research and a structured route through to the realisation. Once again, realistic items were achieved by the majority of candidates.

The “recycling brief” had been very well received and candidates researched and displayed a broad range of innovative ideas in this area, e.g. a newspaper sewn skirt! The use of existing items is one way of overcoming the time constraint of the task – this was often carried out successfully but needed to be monitored a little more closely if the initial starting item was difficult to work with. When working with existing items such as jeans, t shirts and leggings, fabrics tend to be difficult to embellish and sew. This can, at times inhibit the candidates’ ability to demonstrate skills that are of a high standard. For example, sewing a patch onto the leg of a pair of very slim line leg jeans makes it difficult to achieve a satisfactory finish. If candidates chose to make simple items, they could then utilise these better to demonstrate their range of skills and incorporate more construction techniques as well as decorative techniques.

Lively and individual interpretations were achieved in most cases, although occasionally the same basic item had been made, which can limit creativity and an individual approach.

It was particularly pleasing to see a wide range of creative processes demonstrated including painting, batik, dying etc.

Much of the practical work was well constructed with many candidates making good use of computerised developments.

Many centres are now using CAD/CAM widely and image transfer was quite popular again, often with very successful results. Basic computerised designs/patterns are not considered to be in the top bracket for assessment in the chosen skill/technique section of the production.

Practical items varied with ability but on the whole the practical work was of a pleasing standard. Please do not include straight pins within candidates work – thank you.

The assessment of candidates’ practical skills tended to be a little generous within the accuracy section of the assessment criteria, e.g. an item must have appropriately neatened seams of a very good quality or intricate embroidery of a high standard, if the skill is to access the higher band of marks.

The choice of the final outcome at times, limited some candidates potential, restricting the possible range of marks that could be awarded. Further guidance regarding the final selection of the practical work may be necessary in some cases to reflect the candidates’ true abilities. In some candidates’ work only three skills were assessed which did not allow for some individuals to access the full marking criteria.

It is helpful if candidates are made aware of the assessment criteria to ensure that they achieve their best possible marks. Teachers may also find it helpful in future to use the mark breakdown sheet “controlled assessment, further guidance tasks 1 and 2” which can be accessed on the WJEC website under documents, teacher’s resources. This can be used as a form of annotation and attached to the coursework, hopefully saving valuable time.

Task 2

Please note that a new Task 2 brief has been included on the website, for commencing in September 2012. This brief will replace the “ Fantasy ” brief.

Again, it was pleasing to see the development in some candidates work from their coursework Task 1 to that produced for the coursework Task 2. Most work followed the criteria required, showing good teaching and a logical approach.

Both the set briefs produced some delightful and imaginative responses and showed clearly that candidates were up to date with current trends, both in fashion and in the home.

Folio

Both briefs proved to be topical and equally popular with some candidates producing innovative work that was a pleasure to mark. Both themes were well researched allowing for a range of appropriate and manageable outcomes which met the marking criteria. Please note that research into both briefs is not necessary.

The folios accompanying Task 2, like those of the coursework Task 1, were generally well presented, informative and detailed.

To aid candidates' research, the chosen task should be highlighted and presented on the first page of the folio as a vital starting point for the candidates. Better candidates stated their aims clearly at the beginning of their folios and were then able to refer back to these aims in their evaluations. The majority of candidates were able to plan and collate information succinctly adding key features to illustrate application of knowledge and a sound understanding of the requirements of the task.

Candidates need to ensure that all research is relevant, related to the task and kept to within the recommended ten sheets. Sadly, some candidates did not understand the requirements of the brief and failed to discuss fully the outcomes of the analysis. Those candidates who explored the brief in detail, seem to have enjoyed the challenge and presented well-structured and individual pieces of work.

Candidates should be encouraged to research and develop a range of design ideas fully before making their final choice on page one. Often, candidates had a variety of design ideas from which to develop their final design idea, but this was not always clearly shown or justified. Candidates need to choose a range of designs, choose one idea and then develop it! The development of an item needs to be more open to begin with, then refined.

Candidates should be encouraged to plan and prepare carefully, with due regard to the balance of marks available, so that all elements can be accomplished within the time scale allowed. The planning section from some centres was very limited and did not always reflect an on-going process. Good candidates benefit by including relevant and informed testing of fabrics (referring to the fibre content) to confirm suitability.

Material samples should relate to the chosen item with the selected materials clearly indicated. The testing of construction techniques are important and sampling work should be included before final decisions are made. However, sample techniques are not always carried out as well as on the final item. Sample techniques need to be carried out carefully in order to make the correct choice and judgements.

Candidates should be advised to show that they have planned their work and investigated the suitability of their chosen fabrics and techniques, in order to improve their marks. Often good and relevant testing of fabrics and techniques was included in folio work. It was very clear that many candidates used their techniques and testing to inform their manufacturing decisions.

Candidates' evaluations continue to improve – many evaluations were thorough and very well done. Most candidates made a reasonable/good attempt at justifying the planning and organisation of the task. What the evaluations do lack in some cases, are the suggestions for improvement and further developments.

More able candidates provided comments on all areas of the work undertaken and accessed the higher marks. The weaker candidates still have a tendency to produce a summative and rather descriptive evaluation of the work undertaken. Photographic evidence was widely included and very helpful to moderators. Thank you.

Realisation

The practical solutions to both briefs were, on the whole, modern interpretations and reflected a wide range of abilities, interests and skills. Both the set briefs produced some delightful and imaginative responses though far more candidates chose the creative item rather than the garment option. Where garments were submitted, they were generally of a good standard. Many of the creative items involved exciting design ideas and interesting fabrics to create a wide variety of outcomes.

The majority of items made were realistic and showed at least four skills. Where five or six skills are available for marking, teachers should assess all the skills and choose the four best skills for assessment. Candidates should be discouraged from choosing and constructing complex and time consuming items and techniques. It was pleasing to see a collection of both original and manageable practical items for both Task 1 and Task 2.

Tasks chosen allowed both fashion and creative items to be made and a wide range of both functional and decorative techniques were used. There was plenty of opportunity for candidates to reflect their ability and improve upon their standard of workmanship.

Candidates still continue to develop new and innovative ideas using a variety of CAD/CAM, machine embroidery, hand embroidery and beadwork, transfer printing, paints, dyes and burning techniques to achieve varied and exciting effects on new fabrics.

In many centres it was evident that candidates were well aware of the marking criteria and of the areas required to cover, in order to access the full range of marks. The appropriateness of practical items did not always allow the candidates to complete the necessary skills to a high level, e.g. bean bag and painted canvas. Smaller more compact items may be more suitable and cheaper to produce.

Overall, the marking was again fair and realistic, but there are still a few centres where the practical work was slightly over marked, e.g. open seams had been awarded the full 8 marks, but were uneven and not neatened or pressed open, very simple darts would not merit the full 8 marks, basic applique was awarded a full 8 marks for a simple rectangle sewn onto a cotton fabric with an open machine zig-zag stitch. A high level of skill must be evident to gain full marks for each skill assessed.

When marking the skills on final items it may be helpful to mark one skill for each section rather than grouping skills together. It is also necessary to consider the amount of chosen technique and the fabric when awarding the marks, e.g. to show a series of three chain stitches or to attach two beads is insufficient.

Please note that marks awarded for “overall construction” should not be included under the four skills/techniques section. Thank you for providing photographs of the work – this helped a great deal. Please ensure that it is easy to identify candidates work once the TX3 is removed.

Conclusion

My thanks also go to the enthusiastic subject teachers for their continued support and passion for the subject and who have worked so hard to ensure the success of the new specification.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to my dedicated examiners and moderators for their continued hard work and to the subject officer Mrs Allison Candy for her continued support and leadership.

HOME ECONOMICS (CHILD DEVELOPMENT)

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Summer 2012

Chief Examiner: Anna Davies

Unit	Entry	Max Mark	Mean Mark
1	3,424	80	35.9
2	3,537	60	35.5
3	3,460	60	38.3

N.B. The marks given above are raw marks and not uniform marks.

UNIT 1 – Theory Paper

- Q.1 The majority of candidates gave the correct answers.
- Q.2 This question was poorly answered; a great deal of guesswork seemed to be used showing little knowledge of voluntary organisations.
- Q.3 This question had quite weak answers considering that many candidates had undertaken a child study focusing on physical development.
- (a) A very wide range of ages were given which displayed limited understanding of physical development.
- (b) Several candidates misunderstood the question and stated three physical activities such as walking, running or jumping. Other answers offered factors such as the opportunity to play outdoors in the garden or park, playing with siblings and friends and family guidance and encouragement.
- Q.4 (a) The majority of candidates stated calcium and an acceptable food source, usually milk or cheese. A few candidates offered either vitamin D or fluoride as the second nutrient sometimes with the correct food source.
- (b) All candidates had some knowledge about ways to prevent tooth decay. Frequent answers were visiting the dentist regularly, cleaning teeth daily and avoiding sugary foods and drinks.
- Q.5 (a) Some candidates did not attempt these questions. Many of the answers given showed rather limited knowledge of the terminology.

- (b) Giving the mother-to-be support and helping to keep her calm and relaxed were common answers. Better candidates offered some further description such as assisting with breathing exercises.
 - (c) Several answers did not consider a newborn baby's appearance and stated two eyes, nose and mouth. Other candidates mentioned a range of characteristics such as vernix, lack of head control and white spots.
- Q 6
- (a)
 - (i) Generally the correct diseases were named.
 - (ii) Many candidates identified diphtheria and tetanus. A common error was to state polio as the third disease instead of pertussis/whooping cough.
 - (b) There were several rather vague answers, such as to prevent the child becoming ill or to stop the child being sick. Benefits should have been linked directly to infectious diseases and included how immunisation offers protection to the child and lessens the risk within the wider community.
 - (c) Most candidates highlighted the need to offer the sick child care and attention as well as monitoring the health condition. Giving fluids, checking the temperature and seeking medical help if necessary were common features. Some answers were rather repetitive while the better candidates discussed the environment, suitable activities and allowing the child to rest.
- Q.7
- Some candidates failed to gain marks for questions (a), (b) and (c) as they named dishes that were not on the 'Happy Bunnies Menu'.
- (a) The correct answer was stated by the majority of candidates.
 - (b) Not well answered. Either candidates did not know coeliac disease or misread the question and gave a dish suitable for a coeliac child.
 - (c) Generally quite well answered.
 - (d) All candidates had some knowledge about the issue of food refusal and how to overcome the problem. Many discussed the child being tired, unwell, not hungry or a fussy eater. There were some good suggestions to solve this problem by serving small portions of attractive food, eating as a family so the mealtime is a happy social event and involving the child with the preparation of the meal. Giving rewards of sweets and toys were not acceptable answers. Some candidates failed to consider both areas of the question 'food refusal' and 'ways to deal with this situation' so gained fewer marks.
- Q.8
- (a) Some candidates misunderstood the question and stated two stages of play instead of two types of play. Marks were awarded for any relevant information within the text. Different types of play were identified and discussed showing some knowledge and understanding. However, when answering this question the candidates should have focused on how the type of play could help the child's development, offering named examples, and this was frequently missing. Candidates should be encouraged to include more information, such as imaginative play promotes fine motor skills as children often dress up whereas creative play develops hand and eye co-ordination skills when playing with building bricks.

- (b) In this answer the positive and negative effects on a child's development should have been discussed. Several answers failed to address both aspects so only gained few marks. Many candidates mentioned the benefit to the intellectual development and gave some examples of games which would assist the numeracy and literacy skills of young children. The improvement of fine motor skills was also frequently discussed. Their negative side was not so well considered with some brief mention about the lack of opportunities for physical development as well as social development. Some answers were just descriptive accounts about the variety of electronic and computerised toys available on the market and did not discuss the effect they had on the child's development.

Q.9 A wide range of factors which cause family difficulties were mentioned. One common factor was finance linked to redundancy, unemployment and low paid jobs. Many candidates discussed the problems linked to the lack of money, such as the stress of parents trying to pay for the essential items and how young children may lack the necessary food and clothing. Some candidates highlighted how parents feel upset when they are unable to purchase toys for the children's birthdays and at Christmas which could result in the children feeling rejected. The separation of parents, which may lead to a divorce, was identified as causing many pressures between the parents and how young children felt confused and stressed. Better candidates continued by discussing the issue of children having to live with one parent and the possible problems which may arise from becoming part of a step-family. Disabled children, sibling rivalry, ill health and death were also discussed. A few answers mentioned temper tantrums of toddlers and lack of sleep when babies were teething. No marks were given for these factors.

Q.10 (a) This was the more popular question. Some candidates gave a detailed account of all aspects of the day with reference to snacks, drinks, mealtimes and giving the toddler the opportunity for a sleep. Other accounts recorded a range of activities which would assist the development of a young child but failed to consider the need for food, drink and rest during the day. Many candidates discussed the planned activities with reference to 'PIES' and offered some well-focused discussion to support their chosen task. It was pleasing to see all areas of development being covered in some answers whereas weaker candidates often ignored emotional development and only briefly referred to other areas of development. A few accounts were very narrative with sometimes limited justifications to support their planned activities. These accounts gained low marks. The toddler was given the opportunity to enjoy a variety of environments. Very popular outdoor locations were the park, the beach and the garden. Outdoor situations were linked to physical and social development with the additional benefit of fresh air and exercise. Indoor activities usually encouraged intellectual development by playing with games, reading and artwork all of which helped emotional development. Some schedules for the toddler's day seemed quite demanding and would probably make the young child extremely tired and even the carer quite weary. A few answers appeared to lose the theme of the care of a toddler for a day and just outlined a range of activities which would help the child's development, thus gaining fewer marks.

- (b) Some candidates read the word 'mealtimes' and focused their answer on the nutritional value of meals with little reference to the social and educational value of meals to the child. Marks were awarded for any relevant information given. There was some detailed discussion about the social value to a young child of having shared meals, as well as conversation, with family and friends. Many candidates identified that in this situation the child had the chance to observe and copy the behaviour of other individuals. It was pleasing to see in some answers a range of social skills such as 'please/thank you', taking turns, not speaking with a mouth full of food and not interrupting conversations. Also, personal hygiene was discussed as well as hand and eye co-ordination skills when using cutlery. However, some candidates did not develop their work on social skills and lost valuable marks. The educational aspect of mealtime was also discussed but often quite briefly. Some of the educational factors mentioned were giving the child the opportunity to assist with the preparation of the meal as well as laying the table and learning about the different meals throughout the day. Language and numeracy skills could be extended by talking about the various food products.

UNIT 2 Child Study – Controlled Assessment

Administration

The majority of centres sent the work to the moderator on time. Please ensure that both the candidate and the member of staff sign the CD3 coversheet. It is a requirement that a Time Log must be completed by each individual candidate and must not be a generic version for the whole group.

General Comments

In general the child studies had a more focused approach and contained less irrelevant information. Most candidates at the beginning of the study had stated their chosen task which enabled them to remain on the selected topic of development. However, there were some Child Studies that failed to keep to the chosen area which meant candidates had spent time unnecessarily undertaking research work and recording information that failed to benefit their coursework.

Most Child Studies were divided into five sections. The section on the analysis and interpretation of results was sometimes missing or combined with the evaluation which frequently meant that it lacked vital information and discussion and could only gain limited marks.

Plan of Action

This section often began with a letter to the parents of the study child containing relevant information for stating the selected area of study and the age of the child. The plan of action for the 15 hours of supervised time within the centre was usually recorded.

Candidates should be reminded it is essential that the whole route of the Child Study has been covered in the plan as often the evaluation section was not allocated any time. As mentioned in last year's report the time plan for contact time with the study child was still rather weak and did not provide sufficient detailed information about the planned visits. It is essential that candidates draw up a time plan before carrying out any activities so that they have a framework which covers all the proposed tasks in order to observe the child's development.

Introduction

The aims of many of the Child Studies were rather vague and failed to cover all the necessary steps to achieve a completed task. It would be helpful to the candidates if they were encouraged to think carefully about their aims which must cover all the tasks within the Child Study.

Most candidates were able to offer some detailed information about the study child, the family and neighbourhood. The norms of development were quite well listed although once again there was some unnecessary information. The candidates are only required to list the norms of the selected area of development and for the relevant age of the child. Some Child Studies contained norms from birth and sometimes for all the areas of development. This year there was a greater number of Child Studies with some focused background information about the selected area of development, enabling candidates to gain relevant knowledge to assist them with the observations of the child.

Gathering Information

In general, the observations of the child were fairly well recorded with good use made of side headings which enabled the candidates to produce relevant information. These visits should correspond with the planned visits in the time plan and it would be helpful to remind the candidates about this as it was not always so in many of the Child Studies. There were some narrative accounts recorded which gained few marks as they offered limited information. Candidates should be encouraged to record their results. Many Child Studies lacked this important element. In some Child Studies there were paintings and drawings done by the child placed at the end of the folder but no reference made to them. It would be beneficial if the relevant findings were recorded at the end of each visit. Candidates should be encouraged to label and annotate results such as graphs, tick charts, weekly diet sheets, photographs and the child's creative work.

Analysis/Interpretation

This is generally the weakest section of the Child Study and candidates need to offer much more information supported by discussion to gain marks. The norms of development that have been assessed should be recorded and, alongside each one, the results from the visits. In some Child Studies candidates had listed some norms of development that had not featured in the gathering information section and yet were still able to present some results for which there was no evidence. Candidates need to look carefully back and study their findings so they are fully aware of their research and do not rely on guesswork. Once they have produced this chart they must discuss these results and consider carefully the question 'Why?'. Candidates have the opportunity to display their knowledge and understanding by offering some personal viewpoints about the findings linked to genetics, lifestyle and environment. This was frequently absent from many Child Studies. Once again this section was often over marked and centres need to be aware that well focused discussion is required to gain high marks.

Evaluation

Most candidates offered an evaluation of the Child Study. Some candidates just gave an account of the various tasks undertaken without any personal thoughts and comments so could only gain limited marks. Candidates should be encouraged to consider all areas of the Child Study and offer some detailed discussion highlighting both positive and negative aspects of the various tasks. The possible areas for development should not be just to improve the presentation of the work but should discuss how the research work could have been extended or the possibility of studying another child of a different age or a different area of development.

Presentation

Most studies were well presented in soft files. Please instruct candidates to avoid large font sizes, which inevitably mean more sheets of paper. Plastic pockets are not necessary but if they are used please inform candidates to ensure there is text on both sides within each pocket to avoid unnecessary bulk.

UNIT 3 Child Focused Task – Controlled Assessment

Administration

Once again, please ensure that each candidate produces an individual Time Log and a completed CD3 coversheet. Please ensure that the candidate's name and number are written on the first page of the folder so the work can be identified when the CD3 coversheet is removed. It is helpful if the 8 pages of paper are stapled together either at the top left corner or along the left hand side of the page.

Task 1 required the candidates to undertake some investigational work related to the social skills of young children and produce a suitable activity to encourage a social skill. In general candidates offered an explanation of the 'key words' and produced some relevant background information. It would be beneficial if candidates wrote a conclusion about the findings of their research work which would provide them with some information for the next section of the task. Many folios contained very weak aims which failed to focus on the required task and frequently there was no mention about producing an item to help a social skill. Candidates must record their aims for the task in much greater detail.

Task 2 required the candidates to undertake some investigational work related to eating habits of young children and produce a range of dishes which would appeal to a 'fussy eater'. The candidates usually offered some focused background information with many undertaking a questionnaire with parents and thus obtaining some useful primary research evidence. In this task a conclusion of the research findings is necessary as it enables candidates to consider their findings which can assist them with the task of choosing suitable food dishes. The aims must be recorded in order and in detail. Sometimes the making of the food dishes was not stated in the aims.

Selection and Development of Ideas

Stating the specifications of the item or dishes followed by a 'brainstorm' is a good way to begin this section of the task. Not all candidates produced a 'brainstorm' and failed to offer a wide range of possible ideas. In general, the selection and rejection process was undertaken with a range of about 8 food dishes or 4 for the social item listed in a criteria chart. Candidates must be encouraged to support their final choice with some detailed discussion.

Planning

In some folders it was pleasing to see evidence of experimental work at the beginning of this section. Some candidates had experimented with different types of font sizes, materials and ways of sticking paper. While those undertaking the food task had carried out some practical work using different size cutters or cake cases, various toppings or ingredients for dishes, other candidates produced several sketches of possible ways of presenting dishes that would appeal to a fussy eater. This experimental work must be discussed fully and can often lead to a change of plan which will produce a better end result.

There was a very wide range of standard of work in the flow chart. Some candidates gave information about the required ingredients or materials with detailed flow charts including hygiene and safety rules. On the other hand some folios contained very limited information which offered little help to the candidates while undertaking the practical work. Candidates must be encouraged to further develop their flow charts by including detailed information about each stage of the practical work. To access the higher mark bands in this section there must be evidence of the experimental aspect of the planning section.

Making

Please note that candidates should have carried out all the practical tasks independently and displayed good health and safety skills. For moderation purposes it is very helpful to see photographic evidence of the items in the folder. Concern was expressed that generous marks are often awarded for this section. Please take care when candidates “assemble” rather than “make” dishes.

Evaluation

Candidates usually evaluated both the practical outcome and the written work. Some candidates need to offer much more detailed description of the finished food dishes and describe all four criteria of appearance, texture, flavour and aroma. They should also consider if these food dishes would appeal to a young child and any possible improvements that could be made in the future. The item to help social skills was generally fairly well evaluated. Candidates must review all aspects of the task and offer discussion about good and weak areas of the work. Personal viewpoints are an important feature in this section of the task and candidates must be encouraged to express them.

Presentation

Most candidates used the required 8 pages of A3 paper and there was pleasing use of ICT skills. There were a few candidates who used more than the allocated 8 pages of A3 paper and shaded over the text which proved difficult to read.

Conclusion

There was some outstanding work especially within the coursework again this year, and clearly candidates have enjoyed the work and teachers have worked hard.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to all the assistant examiners and moderators for their hard work again this year, and the subject officer for her support.



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