



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

HOME ECONOMICS

SUMMER 2016

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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.

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HOME ECONOMICS: CHILD DEVELOPMENT

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Summer 2016

UNIT 1: PRINCIPLES OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT

It was pleasing to note that the majority of candidates attempted all the questions; however candidates should be reminded to use information gathered in the Child Study and Child Focused Task to support answers to related questions in the Examination paper. Many candidates missed opportunities to use this evidence to achieve marks in the higher mark bands for several questions.

- Q.1 (a) This question was on the whole well answered as many candidates were able to correctly label the diagram. When incorrect, candidates tended to mix up the placenta and the amniotic sac.
- (b) The majority of candidates could identify the twins as being non-identical; however very few candidates provided the correct reason of each foetus having their own placenta. Many candidates used the diagram and stated each foetus had a separate sac or were different sizes.
- Q.2 This question was well answered with many candidates achieving full marks. When candidates did not achieve full marks this was because they tended to confuse vasectomy and mastectomy.
- Q.3 (a) (i-iii) Again many candidates achieved full marks but when incorrect answers were given candidates confused menstruation with menopause.
- (b) (i-iii) Overall, this question was not well answered by the majority of candidates.
- (i) Answers for why low sugar drinks are best for babies were correctly identified.
- (ii) Very few candidates could correctly give the reasons why protein is important. Popular answers referred to strong bones and teeth.
- (iii) Very few candidates could correctly give the reasons why protein and vitamin C is important. Again strong bones and teeth was a common response, there seemed to be a lack of understanding of the function of Vitamin C and Calcium.
- Q.4 (a) Generally, this question was reasonably well answered. Candidates identified morning sickness, tender breasts and craving new foods as the most popular answers, surprisingly a missed period was not as popular as expected.
- (b) It was quite pleasing that candidates were able to correctly identify why the placenta is important for the development of the foetus. Helps the baby breathe and provides food were the most popular answers. Occasionally to remove carbon dioxide was stated or to remove waste products. Sometimes candidates just stated to provide the baby with a named nutrient which was not sufficient to be awarded the mark.

- (c) Disappointedly very few candidates achieved full marks due to stating that the gender of the baby can be obtained from ultrasound scans as one of the three required answers. This is not the purpose of the ultrasound scan and candidates should be reminded about this fact and to read the question carefully as important information was required, for example heartbeat, position of the placenta, number of foetus.
- Q.5 (a) Surprisingly, this question was incorrectly answered by many candidates who could not correctly identify three common infectious diseases. Many candidates stated colds, food poisoning and flu. When correct with at least one answer the most popular response was chicken pox.
- (b) This question was reasonably well answered as candidates made sure they referenced a high temperature and not just stated temperature. On the whole the majority of candidates were able to identify two signs of feeling unwell, the most popular answers being sickness, loss of appetite and drowsy.
- (c) This question was not well answered as the question was not read correctly by many candidates. Most responses referred to what the parent could do to help a child when he/she is actually in hospital for example, read stories at bedtime so the routine is the same, bring toys for the child, comfort the child before the operation. However, the question asked for ways a parent could prepare a child for a stay in hospital therefore candidates should discuss what could be done before the child is admitted for example, talk about the hospital stay, take the child for a pre visit to the hospital, role play games about being in hospital, allow the child to pack their own bag with assistance from the parent. Sometimes packing a bag was referred to by candidates but it was by the parent only and not the child.
- Q.6 (a) This question was well answered with the majority of candidates providing the three correct responses. However, candidates should be reminded to only tick the correct boxes and not add other information or tick more than one box in the hope of getting the question marked correct. Responses that ticked both true and false for the same question were not accepted.
- (b) (i & ii) Generally the correct answers were given; it was good to see that candidates had used information that may have been in the child study element of the course. The definition was often accompanied by examples allowing candidates to achieve full marks.
- (c) The responses were generally weak, which was surprising as many candidates would have studied this element of the course whilst carrying out the child study. Candidates tended to repeat the same points for different aspects of the climbing frame for example, improves balance when climbing on the frame, climbing on the steps, going down the slide or using their gross motor skills and large muscles when climbing, going down the slide, going up the steps. Repeated statements did not allow candidates to achieve many marks; a range of answers is expected to be awarded marks in the higher mark bands. Candidates should be reminded to read the question carefully and discuss only the area of development identified; many candidates discussed social, emotional and intellectual development instead of concentrating on physical development as stated in the question. This lost valuable time and used up the space allocated for the question resulting in limited physical development related points that could achieve marks.

- Q.7 (a) The majority of candidates achieved full marks with the most popular answers being divorced, separated, death of parent and working away.
- (b) Few candidates answered this question well as they incorrectly referenced giving food parcels, money to help one parent families and child care to enable parents to go to work. Gingerbread will give advice on financial advice via fact sheets or telephone conversations but do not give out money. Candidates often tended to repeat the words in the question by stating Gingerbread offer support to one parent families which was not awarded any marks. When awarded a mark this was because candidates had stated that advice would be given which was a basic response to the question; limited knowledge was evident.
- (c) This question was reasonably well answered as candidates were able to discuss a range of benefits of being part of an extended family. Popular answers were given as always someone there for emergencies and child care, cousins to play with and possible financial assistance. Candidates could have achieved higher marks if answers had been developed to address the 'discuss' command verb in the question. Sometimes candidates referred to the negative side of having an extended family which was not a requirement for this question.
- Q.8 (a) Reasonable knowledge was displayed as many candidates could explain the term emotional development; the most popular answers were development of feelings or emotions. Candidates often provided examples to clarify their explanations allowing them to achieve full marks, however very few candidates achieved the two marks for identifying that it was the development of a child's ability to control his/her feelings.
- (b) This question was not well answered; many responses referred to social development and not emotional. A lack of knowledge was evident and as stated previously candidates need to consider the 'because' factor to achieve marks in the higher mark band. Very few candidates achieved more than half marks for this question. Many answers referred to parents showing the child pictures of different emotions and asking them to identify the emotions and unfortunately some candidates referred to frightening children and not letting them get their own way so that they have experience of different emotions.
- Q.9 This question was poorly answered with not many candidates achieving above half marks. Candidates must be encouraged to develop their answers and to discuss fully to access higher marks. Merely stating several points that are often repetitive does not qualify for top marks. Not many candidates offered a balanced answer giving both positive and negative effects of watching television which is required to gain marks in the top mark band and address the 'assess' command verb in the question. Sometimes candidates referred to television being educational for children but then went on to describe every children's programme and how it could aid development in the various areas; this unfortunately does not achieve many marks as it is repetitive and not a balanced answer. Candidates also very frequently stated that watching television is bad for the eyesight.
- Q.10 (a) and (b) were equally popular with candidates. On the whole Q10 (b) was answered better with candidates scoring higher marks.

- Q.10 (a) Lack of knowledge of healthy eating habits was apparent in this question and was disappointing considering that the food task was the most popular task for Unit 3.

Better candidates were able to note several relevant points and discuss them in detail which allowed them to score well. A few accounts were narrative with sometimes limited justifications to support the answers. These accounts gained low marks as did a bulleted list of answers. Many merely noted points and scored low marks.

Little reference was made to how the parent can encourage healthy eating habits by ensuring snacks are healthy alternatives to crisps and sweets, avoiding sugary drinks and foods that are high in sugar and fat. Some reference was made to the Eatwell Plate but very briefly and was not developed to consider the proportions of food groups that should be eaten. A few candidates mentioned about parents being role models and the importance of the whole family eating the same well balanced meals.

Popular answers included making pictures out of the food and serving it on cartoon/picture plates, hiding disliked food in dishes, making food look attractive and colourful and giving small portions, however many of these answers apply to providing meals for children and are not specific to encouraging healthy eating habits.

- (b) When answered well, candidates provided a balanced answer that covered the effects on a family of having a child with special/additional needs. Candidates who displayed good knowledge and covered all three areas – effect on the parent, whole family and other children within the family and were able to access marks in the top mark band.

Many candidates identified a selection of relevant points; however, some candidates did not develop these points fully by providing justifications for their answers which lost valuable marks.

Candidates need to be reminded that bulleted lists do not achieve many marks and that the answer should be well balanced covering a range of relevant points; both negative and positive effects would be expected to access the higher mark bands.

Conclusion

Candidates need to read all discursive writing type questions very carefully to ensure they understand the requirements of the question. Where candidates misunderstood the questions, they were unable to access the full range of marks.

Candidates should take time to plan their answer by identifying the key words in the questions then carefully make note of the possible answers that would elicit a well-balanced response to the question. To achieve marks in the higher mark band candidates must show an excellent understanding and application of knowledge.

As this examination is now marked electronically candidates should clearly indicate where they have used extra pages and avoid writing outside the boxes on the pages.

HOME ECONOMICS: CHILD DEVELOPMENT

General Certificate of Secondary Education

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UNIT 2 AND UNIT 3: CHILD STUDY AND CHILD FOCUSED TASK

The Child Studies were presented quite well and the majority had included the title of the relevant task. Some Child Studies were very large and bulky containing many pages of irrelevant information. Sheets of information, frequently downloaded from websites, about various topics, such as home safety, toys, clothing and equipment for babies and young children, are unnecessary and should not be awarded marks. Candidates should be reminded to study the selected task and that offering additional unrelated information indicates an unfocused approach. It must be remembered that these Child Studies are to be completed within a 15 hour classroom Controlled Assessment time limit.

In general the Child Studies contained five sections covering all the relevant areas of study. Candidates should be encouraged to offer information and discussion about all sections of the Child Study to have opportunity to access the higher marks. The most popular task was the investigation of a young child's physical development.

Plan of Action

As expected it was a common feature to have two time plans assisting candidates with the work to be undertaken. The time plan for the 15 hours of controlled assessment time in the classroom included all areas of the task for completion of the Child Study. The observation time plan offered some relevant information about the proposed activities with the study child, although frequently these time plans were too brief. Candidates need to be encouraged to include more information in the observation time plan to assist them to undertake well organised visits. Many pieces of vital information were missing, such as the specific area of development to be observed, the location of the activity, the task the study child will be required to do and the necessary resources. It is important that candidates fully appreciate the benefits of a detailed time plan for the observations. The time plan should be used as a tool to complete all the six visits. The letter to parents, asking for permission to visit the child, should appear in this section. The age of the study child should also be stated.

Introduction

The Introduction should provide well focused aims which enable candidates to work through all sections of the Child Study. As in previous years, many aims were too generic, for example 'producing neat work' or 'finishing within the allocated time', and often ignored the important task of undertaking activities with the study child to gain results about the child's progress. Candidates need to consider carefully all the tasks necessary to produce the Child Study and record them as their aims. The aims must cover all aspects of the Child Study, including the analysis of the results and evaluation of the work undertaken.

Once again, some questionnaires were far too long and failed to focus on the relevant areas of the child's health and progress in the selected area of development, the family and home life.

Most candidates recorded background information about the selected area of development with the relevant norms of development for the planned activities to be observed as set out in the time plan. There were some Child Studies which contained norms of development for an inappropriate age. Also it is not necessary to record norms of development which are not going to be examined as this shows that the candidate has failed to adopt a selective approach.

Gathering Information

Within this section of the Child Study should be the recorded observations as planned in the time plan. Once again some candidates failed to follow their observation plan and frequently did not undertake all the relevant tasks to obtain the required results. Candidates should be encouraged to follow their plan for visits and activities, only deviating from this for example due to illness or poor weather.

Many candidates used the first visit to establish a good relationship with the child by playing together. This visit also provides an opportunity to gain more information about the child's development, such as height and weight for physical development, sharing of toys for social development and talking for verbal skills.

The use of side headings enabled candidates to produce well written accounts and record the information required, such as the norms of development being observed, the method of the task and the findings. Some candidates included a conclusion for each observation which offered the opportunity for personal viewpoints.

Once again narrative reports of the observation sessions were evident offering very little factual information and frequently failing to undertake the planned activity with the study child. This method of recording information should be discouraged and should only be awarded a few marks, which was not always the case as generous marking was evident in some Child Studies.

As in previous years, there was a lack of results recorded in this section of the Child Study. Candidates must use a wide range of recording methods for the results and label them clearly. There should be clearly labelled tick charts, graphs, child's artwork and, if parental permission has been granted, photographs.

At the end of some Child Studies there were examples of the study child's artwork and photographs of activities, such as riding a bike and playing a board game with a sibling, which candidates had failed to mention. It is preferable for results to be placed at the end of each visit as that provides candidates with an easy means of reference.

There was some generous marking of this section where there was a lack of evidence of results and failure to use a variety of ways to record them.

Analysis and Interpretation

Some candidates provided quite a detailed account of the results, making comparisons with the norms of developments and offering relevant discussion.

However, this section was sometimes either absent, very weak or marked too generously. Marks were awarded for very limited evidence with little or no discussion. Some child studies included information and discussion that was not based on any evidence provided. Candidates should not include any norms of development which are untested and for which there is no evidence in the Gathering Information.

Candidates should record in table format, the norms of development which have been observed with the results obtained alongside. This would allow the candidate to identify if the study child is above, below or on target for the relevant norm of development. When analysing the results candidates should be instructed to always to ask the question 'Why?' Discussion about the findings is vital and candidates must include their personal viewpoints considering the study child's health, family and home environment.

Evaluation

Many candidates provided focused reviews about all areas of the task. Good discussion was given about the advantages of producing plans to assist with the recording of the Child Study and the organisation of the visits. Personal opinions were recorded about the various methods used to gain information as well as analysing the results. Analytical comments were offered about the strengths of the work undertaken and problems encountered along the way. There were some very narrative evaluations, which just offered a descriptive report of 'What I did' and lacked any review comments, and these can only be credited with a few marks.

Presentation

Most studies were organised well and presented in soft files. Please discourage candidates from placing the whole Child Study in a plastic pocket, resulting in a pile of loose sheets of paper that is extremely difficult to manage and moderate. Diary notebooks should be retained by centres and not sent with the coursework.

Candidates are required to produce individual, personal Time Logs.

Assessment

During the Controlled Assessment there should be no input by the teachers. Throughout the 15 hours of the Controlled Assessment time, the candidates must work under examination conditions and teachers must not offer advice or guidance on how individual candidates might improve their coursework. On completion, the Child Studies should be marked and, if required, cross moderated before submitting the selected sample to WJEC.

Centres can view exemplar material on the WJEC website.

Administration

Most centres sent coursework to the moderator by the 5 May deadline date as required. It is important that all centres follow WJEC procedures and adhere to the deadline date set out. Marks should be submitted prior to this date to enable work to arrive with the moderator by 5 May.

Please check the WJEC website for details of the current tasks that can be chosen for the Controlled Assessment.

Unit 3 – Child Focused Task

As in previous years, Task 2, based on multicultural food was most popular.

Interpretation and Analysis

Overall, most candidates had an understanding of the requirements of the tasks. Candidates identified and explained key words. It would have been beneficial if there was more discussion about the main key words 'social skills' and 'foods from other cultures' to assist the candidates gain an understanding about the requirements of the task. The aims are an essential component which assists the candidates to complete all the work.

Often the aims did not cover all the required tasks and some were recorded in the incorrect order, e.g. making the food dishes before undertaking the selection and rejection process. Generic aims, such as the presentation of the work regarding the use of ICT skills and working to the best of one's ability, were not relevant and should not be credited.

As mentioned in previous years, primary research work should be a dominant feature of this section. It provides useful information which can be recorded and form a basis for the development of ideas.

Secondary research evidence from textbooks and websites should be selected carefully and must be relevant to the main focus of the task and to children under five years old.

Task 1

Candidates working on the social skills task had undertaken some useful research work, such as interviews with parents, visiting toy stores and searching websites. This provided candidates with beneficial knowledge and understanding, assisting them to offer worthwhile ideas for the social skills activity.

Task 2

Once again, there was little evidence of primary research findings about the foods from other cultures. Some candidates concentrated on healthy eating for young children and made only brief reference to the multicultural food theme.

Candidates should be encouraged to produce a questionnaire, which include questions about multicultural foods, and undertake interviews with parents. They should research nurseries' menus and visit shops and stores to identify multicultural food products specifically made for young children.

Candidates should be encouraged to discuss both their primary and secondary research findings to assist them with drawing up the specifications for the food dishes or social skills item.

There was generous marking of this section of the task in view of a lack of primary research evidence and limited discussion. Marks should not be awarded for information which is irrelevant to the task.

Selection and Development of Ideas

Most candidates offered a selection of possible ideas supported by some description. The use of a criteria chart was a common feature to assist with the selection and rejection process. A scoring system, supported by discussion, is helpful for identifying the most suitable dishes or item. Candidates working on the food task should aim to select five dishes displaying a variety of ingredients and practical skills. Many candidates could have offered much more discussion to support their final choice.

Planning

In this section of the task there was evidence of some experimental work, such as using different materials, font sizes and techniques for the social play activity. Adapting recipes by omitting ingredients, as well as considering the presentation of the completed dish, was discussed. Candidates should be encouraged to include some well-labelled diagrams to help explain their ideas about the presentation of the dishes.

By recording an evaluation of these experimental activities, candidates possess better knowledge and practical expertise for undertaking the practical work.

Most candidates produced sufficient information about the making process of either the social skills item or the food dishes, including some evidence of personal and kitchen hygiene rules as well as safety rules.

Some candidates provided irrelevant information, such as the causes of food poisoning, and they should be reminded that the kitchen hygiene rules and safety rules should be applicable to the work to be undertaken.

To gain higher band marks there should be evidence of experimental work and discussion as well as detailed planning information. Only limited marks are available for candidates who give little or no evidence of experimental work.

Making

When producing a social skills item, or a selection of food dishes, candidates are required to work independently. The final outcomes should be photographed and included in the evaluation section of the task. A few folders lacked photographs and this made the moderation process more difficult. Photographic evidence is a requirement of the assessment process. When awarding marks the production, presentation of the item and the food dishes, as well as the observance of hygiene and safety rules, should be considered. Candidates need to be aware that young children should be served small servings which look appealing.

Some centres need to study the marking criteria more carefully as there seemed to be generous marking, considering the limited skills shown by some candidates and weak presentation of completed items and food dishes.

Evaluation

The use of side headings enabled most candidates to address all aspects of the task. Candidates carried out quite pleasing evaluations and photographic evidence showed some suitable and well-produced social skills play items and food dishes from various cultures. There was some good evidence of the social skills play item being used by a young child and of a wide range of food dishes served attractively to encourage young children to eat them. Sensory evaluation of the food dishes could have been developed by providing more description and discussion.

Once again there was a tendency for the evaluations to be descriptive and lack analytical discussion. Candidates should be encouraged to give their personal thoughts about the work undertaken. The aims should be reviewed in the evaluation which can assist with identifying and discussing positive and negative issues as well as future developments.

Some generous marking was evident where there was a lack of evaluative discussion.

Assessment

Whole group guidance can be given prior to the commencement of the Controlled Assessment. During the 15 hour classroom Controlled Assessment time teachers are not allowed to give verbal or written advice to individual candidates. The practical work including the completed item and food dishes should be marked during the session. The centres should mark the theory sections of the Child Focused Task, undertake cross moderation if required, and submit the selected sample to WJEC.

Administration

It is a requirement that each candidate produces an individual Time Log.

Placing the papers inside plastic files is unnecessary as it creates extra weight to the package.

The 8 page limit, or equivalent, was not always observed. Please note it is unacceptable to include folded pieces of paper pasted onto pages in order to extend the paper allowance. The use of dark coloured paper and small size of font make the reading of the text difficult and should be discouraged.

Please ensure the WJEC website is visited for details of current tasks and exemplar materials.

Summary

There was pleasing evidence of some very good coursework which showed the commitment and effort of both the candidates and teachers.

HOME ECONOMICS: FOOD AND NUTRITION

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Summer 2016

UNIT 1: PRINCIPLES OF FOOD AND NUTRITION

- Q.1 (a) Most candidates gained 2 marks correctly identifying the images displaying correct personal hygiene.
- Q.2 Almost all candidates gained the maximum marks for this question.
- Q.3 (a) Most candidates correctly identified the correct use of equipment.
- (b) Many candidates correctly identified the temperature of a freezer and refrigerator, however many candidates did not include the degree Celsius symbol.
- Q.4 (a) This was a well answered question with the most popular responses concentrating on fat being solid and oil being liquid at room temperature. There was also good reference to saturated and unsaturated fats and oils.
- (b) Some good responses were evident where candidates clearly identified a named example of a fat or oil and suggested clear use in food preparation. Some candidates misread the question and instead commented on the advantages and disadvantages of fat and oil.
- Q.5 (a) This was answered well with candidates clearly expressing carbohydrate or starch.
- (b) A fairly well answered question with many candidates expressing good knowledge of cooking methods. There were some incorrect responses which concentrated on the finished item rather than the 'method' of cooking, for example a response mashed potato or chipped potato, which were incorrect responses. Often the method of cooking didn't apply to the potatoes.
- (c) This question was answered fairly well, with many candidates expressing the nutritional importance of potatoes in the diet. Many candidates clearly identified carbohydrates as the main nutrient found in potatoes. It was pleasing to see some candidates showing good knowledge of nutrition clearly identifying the less obvious nutritional benefits of potatoes in the diet such as Thiamin and Vitamin C.
- Q.6 (a) This was answered quite well. Many candidates were able to correctly identify the function of ingredients used in cake making. Unfortunately candidates made reference to flour thickening cake mixture rather than identifying bulking, stabilising or adding structure. Popular responses included some good technical vocabulary including aeration, coagulating, binding and caramelising.
- (b) This was answered quite well with many candidates identifying the correct raising agent for cakes.

- (c) This question was generally answered quite well and candidates had made obvious links with practical work carried out in lessons. Many candidates correctly identifying the processes involved in the creaming method. Most candidates gained some marks. Those candidates who scored highly correctly demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of making a batch of cakes correctly and displayed a good understanding and application of theory to practical work. Those candidates who did not score well described how to make scones using the rubbing in method, or even bread with the inclusion of yeast.
- Q.7 (a) Some excellent responses were evident with comments demonstrating good understanding of organic foods. Those candidates that scored highly focussed not only on the use of pesticides and fertilisers but also discussed trend setting, and good links to local food suppliers, sustainability and the benefits to the environment.
- (b) This question was answered fairly well, the most popular methods of shopping being stated as supermarket shopping and online. Candidates who scored highly discussed several methods of shopping for food and clearly linked to the benefits or disadvantages to support answers.
- Q.8 (a) A well answered question with candidates clearly identifying the main benefits of including breakfast in the daily diet. Candidates clearly expressed links with energy, metabolism, maintaining appetite, and helping concentration. Many candidates made links to the nutritional benefit of including breakfast and the fortification of breakfast cereals.
- (b) Many candidates scored well on this question with good examples of breakfast products available. There was good reference to the convenience factor of various breakfast products such as breakfast bars/biscuits and breakfast drinks. Responses also including ready made products such as baked goods and examples that could be 'eaten on the go'. Candidates that did not score highly simply listed or repeated the responses from part (a).
- Q.9 (a) Many candidates were able to interpret the data and provide the correct answer.
- (b) Candidates made reference to the time of year and increase in temperatures to factor the increase of food poisoning cases.
- (c) This was answered quite poorly with many candidates failing to identify correct hygiene and safety measures. Candidates all too often repeated comments which gained no further marks. On occasion candidates incorrectly responded by discussing how to make the items listed in the question. Lower marks were awarded for a basic response to personal hygiene. Those candidates that performed well clearly discussed in depth the measures one would undertake to prevent food poisoning and correctly identified safe working temperatures.
- Q.10 (a) (i) This was by far the most popular question for the final essay question. Many candidates clearly linked obesity to the many health concerns connected with it. It was evident that this topic has been covered with candidates as they were able to correctly state the medical terminology and even linked the health concerns to more emotional and psychological issues. Candidates made good reference to heart conditions and on many occasions correctly identifying Coronary Heart Disease (CHD), type 2 diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure issues.

- (ii) Again well-structured responses, candidates were able to clearly discuss the many ways in which a healthy diet could be achieved. Many candidates discussed ways in which food intake could be managed, clearly linking to the Healthy Eating guidelines, and Eatwell guide/plate. Candidates were able to write freely and expressed sound knowledge of healthy eating practices. In some cases candidates included comments on the benefit of physical exercise, and although a very important factor used in weight management no marks were awarded for this, as the question asked for the management of food intake rather than general healthy lifestyle suggestions.

- (b) (i) Those candidates that chose this question made good links to the factors that influence the multicultural food choice. Candidates who scored well made reference to travel, media, and cookery programmes. Students were also able to link to personal achievements had they researched multicultural foods for assignments in school, and this was clear when written well.

- (ii) Candidates that attempted this question made good reference to the selection of multicultural foods available for consumers. When answered well, candidates made clear links to availability in supermarkets and provided good examples of the spice kits, ready-made sauces, and vast range of convenience foods now available. In most occasions candidates supported commentary with sound examples and this was pleasing to see.

General comments

- Far more candidates attempted to answer all questions which is encouraging

- Many able candidates did not gain marks on the shorter questions but were awarded very high marks for the essay type responses. It is essential candidates practice all question types as part of revision.

- Weaker candidates were gaining average marks for all questions and accessing half marks or more on the last question, which is as expected.

- Reading questions is still a weakness for many candidates. Mis-understanding and choosing the wrong focus is often the reason why candidates are not able to access higher marks. Candidates need examination technique practice sessions and guidance on interpretation of command words used in questions.

- It was pleasing to see a number of candidates draft a plan to help construct a good discussion for the longer response questions in particular question 9 and 10. This should continue to be encouraged by centres as it strengthens the candidate's ability to focus on the key words.

HOME ECONOMICS: FOOD AND NUTRITION

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UNIT 2: FOOD AND NUTRITION PRACTICAL TASKS

The vast majority of centres sent work to moderators by the deadline date of 5 May. It is, however, disappointing to note that some centres failed to meet the date and that moderators had to make enquiries with examinations officers to request work. It is imperative that work arrives by this date to ensure the smooth running of the moderation process. If there are special circumstances which make it difficult for centres to meet the deadline, the subject officer at WJEC should be contacted in advance to discuss a possible extension period. Marks should be submitted to WJEC prior to the deadline date to allow sufficient time for the work to be despatched to arrive with the moderator by May 5.

Administration was generally good. Instructions relating to the sample requirements and the completion of FN1, FN2, FN3 and FN4 forms are available on the WJEC website on the subject page, from November each year. Where names of the whole cohort are listed and submitted on the FN forms, it is useful to highlight the sample names.

Centres should complete FN1 and FN2 forms or the additional cover sheets available on the subject page to include the breakdown of marks for each section in addition to the total mark awarded for both tasks. The moderation process requires recording the breakdown of centre marks and moderator marks to highlight where differences may occur.

Many centres are to be commended on the quality of annotation accompanying candidates' work. This is deemed to be good practice for teachers in addition to facilitating the moderation process in justifying the awarding of marks.

The quality of presentation and organisation of work continues to improve with many centres giving excellent guidance to candidates on the demands of the assessment criteria and the sensible layout of information. This is important in order to facilitate candidates in maximising use of space without compromising on quality.

The use of headings is a useful tool to guide candidates through the tasks without being over prescriptive. This was most evident in centres where candidates succeeded in achieving high marks.

There was evidence in many centres of excellent use of a variety of ICT methods to communicate information concisely.

Photographic evidence of production is essential for both tasks. The quality of photographs was generally good but not all were labelled with candidates' names and numbers for authenticity.

Photographs of entire dishes are generally much more attractive than a portion on a plate; some candidates include both, which is generally acceptable.

Sources of information should be referenced.

Task 1

Investigation and planning

Good practices evident were the analysis of keywords and well formulated aims. Secondary research was, on the whole, relevant and individual, although primary research sometimes tended to be tenuous, often losing focus of the task topic. Many candidates chose a target group to give added focus to their practical choices and this was purposeful and led to good justifications.

Many centres were able to allocate three hour sessions to the practical assessment. This gives a real challenge for orders of work as well as the preparation, cooking and serving of the dishes. This is good practice and allows candidates to set themselves challenging work and showcase their skills.

Candidates should be encouraged to choose dishes which show different level skills and techniques. Reasons for choice need to be clear and justified as well as relevant to topic and to the initial aims set.

Orders of work need to show dovetailing and sequencing. Individual recipes are not sufficient and do not meet the assessment criteria for awarding higher band marks. Submitting recipes does not reflect a candidate's ability to organise time effectively.

Production

Excellent practical work was evident in many centres with candidates demonstrating competent high level skills and aesthetic presentation of dishes. It was obvious that candidates in these centres had developed proficiency and accuracy in practical techniques and took pride in presenting outcomes appropriately and attractively.

Marking of the practical work in many centres continues to be a cause for concern. Generous marking of this element was again a prominent feature of moderation. High marks were awarded for low level skills, ineffective or inaccurate planning and organisation, limited proficiency in execution of techniques and poor quality finish. This was apparent in both paper work and photographic evidence.

Top band marks can only be awarded where candidates show "excellent manipulation of an extensive range of skills, ability to organise work logically and efficiently with pleasing outcomes of excellent finish and high quality"

Evaluation

Evaluations covered the criteria adequately, with realistic costing and good sensory analysis. Nutritional analysis needs to be more focussed with specific conclusions relating to the task. To access the higher mark bands, evaluation must show good use of specialist terminology. There were examples of lengthy evaluations, which, whilst informative, were unnecessary and took work beyond the page limit allowed.

Task 2

Using headings for each section is recommended to guide candidates through the task without being over prescriptive.

Many centres had given accurate guidance for the completion of the task using pro forma and writing frames. This facilitates candidates in maintaining focus and in meeting the assessment criteria effectively whilst still allowing a degree of individuality of interpretation. Progression and development of skills from Task 1 to Task 2 should be evident in folio work and practical competence.

Investigation/Research

All candidates need to be encouraged to formulate meaningful aims set out at the beginning of the work. This was evident in the majority of work moderated.

Secondary research was generally relevant although some lacked individuality. Whilst there was evidence of good primary research many candidates lost focus and used the limited page allowance unwisely on information that provided no future purpose.

Candidates could be encouraged to use research and investigation results more purposefully when making choices for future practical work. Candidates also need to justify a varied and sufficiently challenging choice of practical work.

Please note that copies of recipes do not need to be included in the work.

Development and Selection of Ideas/Planning

It would be helpful if candidates were encouraged to clearly identify work undertaken for the developing and selecting ideas section. This section often appeared to be muddled and it was not always easy to distinguish between development work and final choice for production.

Developmental work was often used a class activity. This can work well if results are clearly recorded, discussed and documented individually. Candidates in many centres failed to use their findings meaningfully and to display continuity through to final practical choices.

Producing a good time plan or order of work is a difficult skill to master but many centres succeeded in accomplishing this very important aspect of preparing candidates for practical assessment. A tabular format is an effective method to use for recording information such as method of making, oven temperatures, special points to ensure success, washing up, food hygiene and safety points succinctly. Colour coding the written instructions for recipes is also an effective and helpful way of being able to follow the plan easily. Many centres need to review the format used for orders of work, organise information more effectively and encourage the use of specialist terminology.

Whilst endorsing the use of the BBC Good Food website as a resource, it must not be used in verbatim: teachers must be vigilant to obvious plagiarism.

Whilst the majority of centres allow a minimum of two hours for production, there are still centres that make isolated dishes in lesson times. Ideally, practical assessment should be carried out in a single session but at the very least, candidates must produce at least two dishes in a single practical session to give them an opportunity to dovetail tasks and show their time management skills. At this stage of the course candidates need to show progression and further development of skills from Task 1.

It is appreciated that timetabling does not always make this possible but the large volume of marks allocated to production justify making special arrangements for the assessment. This will feature in the new specification which stipulates a specific time allocation for practical assessment.

Production

As in Task 1 there were many examples of centre practical marks appearing to be generous in relation to the level of skills, quality of finished dishes and presentation. There was also evidence of candidates repeating dishes in both tasks, for example, burgers, brownies and pizzas. Many candidates played safe with commonly available cereals and some of the dishes produced were not particularly challenging. Photographic evidence often did not support awarding at the top end of the marking scale either in quantity or quality of finish.

Evaluation

Some candidates need to apply critical thinking skills in whole task evaluation. Evaluation often proved to be little more than a narrative of what had been done rather than analysis of results. Many centres need to be reminded of the grading criteria for evaluation which requires discussion of the whole task in a “comprehensive analysis and justification of planning decisions, organisation, resources, methods”, and not just the final practical outcomes.

In many centres, however, candidates completed comprehensive evaluations with discursive comments demonstrating full understanding of the process.

In summary, much of the written work witnessed was of excellent quality and centre marking reflected this fairly. It was encouraging to observe that sound nutritional knowledge and understanding came through in all the different sections of the work.

It was encouraging to observe centres acting upon advice given in the previous year’s report and displaying significant improvement in the standard of work submitted. Sadly few centres ignored report recommendations from 2015 and recurring issues were not addressed. As a consequence, marks were adjusted.

As from 2106 penalties will be imposed on work which does not comply with specification guidelines on length. As good practice for the new specification, some centres need to apply more focus and be stricter on page recommendations for both tasks.

Please refer to Teacher’s guide and specimen assessment material available on the WJEC website for further guidance.

The new specification commencing in 2016 will offer opportunities for teachers to use their existing expertise and subject knowledge to engage learners in the study of Food and Nutrition, a subject which will equip them with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook, and apply the principles of food science and nutrition. It is hoped that centres will embrace the exiting and innovative challenges this course will present.

HOME ECONOMICS: TEXTILES

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Summer 2016

UNIT 1: PRINCIPLES OF TEXTILES AND FASHION

It is obvious that candidates still need further practice in examination technique, i.e. to read questions accurately and to relate their answers to the marks available.

Candidates should also be encouraged and reminded to relate their theory work to the practical work covered during the two year course.

Several weaker candidates still appear unable to make this transition of skills.

- Q.1 A pleasing response. Candidates were able to gain valuable marks for this basic question.
- Q.2 As in Question 1 - this again was a pleasing response with most candidates achieving the full four marks.
- Q.3 (a) Most candidates were able to suggest some points to consider when choosing paper patterns, but it was obvious from the response, that some candidates had never chosen or used a paper pattern.
- (b)(c)(d) A very disappointing response to these basic and straight forward questions relating to paper patterns. The majority of candidates failed to recognise simple pattern markings and terminology and lost valuable marks.
- Q.4 (a)(b) Many candidates did not know what a fibre was and were unable to identify the two types of fibres shown.
- (c) Generally not well answered. Candidates still find it difficult to transfer the skills and knowledge gained in the coursework element to the content of the written paper. Candidates are requested to show evidence of fabric testing, which is linked to the demands of their coursework projects.
- (d) Most candidates were able to identify and give some reasons for the testing of sportswear fabrics.
- Q.5 (a) A pleasing response to this question with most candidates fully aware of the points to consider when designing mobiles with particular reference to safety.

- (b) This was not a popular question and the diagrams/sketches submitted varied considerably in execution. Some candidates produced original design ideas making full use of colour and detail, whilst others misunderstood the question and produced designs for mobile phone covers, cushions and wallhangings. It is in this type of question that the use of colour should be encouraged to aid the quality of their response. There was limited annotation in some cases. Candidates should mention the suitability of fabrics when annotating their designs.
- (c) A very mixed response to this question. Generally, candidates had some knowledge of the decorative and focal features of a child's room but tended to concentrate on different colour schemes and children interests, with very little reference made to the actual textile items, as required. An element of repetition was evident in some cases.
- Q.6 (a) The responses to this question and the diagrams/sketches submitted varied considerably in execution. The majority of candidates produced original and popular fashion design ideas making full use of design features and detail. There was limited annotation in some cases and a few candidates failed to mention the main design features, hand embroidery stitches and the use of beadwork. Leather was a common choice of fabric but this was a poor choice in relation to the majority of hand techniques chosen.
- (b) This question was generally not well answered - the term accessories was not always fully understood. Candidates did not understand how accessories could be used to improve an outfit. Responses sometimes tended to be very repetitive and lacked structure. Some candidates gave lists of popular accessories but failed to suggest how these accessories could be used to advantage and with what type of outfit.
- Q.7 (a) A pleasing response to this question with most candidates fully aware of the benefits to the consumer of shopping at both charity shops and department stores. Many candidates were aware of the environmental issues relating to the purchase of goods from Charity shops and tended to base their response on their own personal experiences. Some candidates confused shopping in Departmental stores with on line stores such as Amazon.
- (b) This question was very well answered with candidates very much aware of the popularity of internet shopping. Most candidates were able to discuss at length the various issues pertaining to internet shopping and were able to give specific advantages and disadvantages based on personal experiences. Many answers made interesting reading.

- Q.8 (a) This was the least popular choice with only a few candidates attempting to discuss the possible preferences for natural fibres. Some candidates did not understand why there may be a preference for natural fibres and proceeded to just list the properties of both natural and man-made fibres. A limited number of candidates were aware of the environmental issues involved and wrote at length on the 'green' issues. This was a disappointing response with candidates losing valuable marks for poor interpretation of the question and lack of knowledge and basic revision.
- (b) This was by far the most popular choice of question but was not well answered by the majority of candidates. Most candidates did not understand the question and chose to discuss at length their knowledge of up to date fashions and the reasons why some fashion trends come in and out of fashion. Very few candidates were able to discuss fashions from the past or give relevant examples to support their response. Some candidates mentioned denim and the wearing of different styles of jeans throughout the various decades and the importance of role models, celebrities and famous fashion designers who tended to rely on past fashion styles and features. Valuable marks were lost for poor interpretation of the question.

HOME ECONOMICS: TEXTILES

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Summer 2016

UNIT 2: TEXTILES AND FASHION PRACTICAL TASKS

Not all centres sent coursework for moderation within the deadline. It is vital that all work arrives on time in order to ensure the smooth running of the moderation process. The required sample must be sent to the WJEC by 5 May. Marks should be submitted to WJEC prior to the deadline date to allow sufficient time for the work to be despatched to arrive with the moderator by this date. Most of the work was carefully packed and correctly sampled, thank you.

It would be appreciated if candidates could be advised to choose items that are suitable for packing and posting, e.g. cushions, quilts and very large soft toys / sculptures, etc. are not really suitable and are expensive to post. Cushion/quilt covers without filling are more appropriate.

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. Please avoid the use of raw pins.

In most instances paperwork had been correctly completed, although not all areas of the coursework were totaled correctly.

Candidates signatures are required on the TX1 and TX2 forms, to certify that the work is all their own. Individual Time Record Sheets are also required all candidates in the sample to show authenticity.

It is helpful at moderation when the practical work for Task 1 and Task 2 are packed separately, this was usually the case. Again this year some centres included both the folios for Task 1 and Task 2 in the same flip folder, one in the front of the folder and one in the back of the folder, this obviously helps to keep all folio pages together and proved most helpful at moderation.

The correct sample was chosen by most centres, please refer to the current WJEC website for the correct sample. A sample of ten is necessary for the majority of centres. It would also be helpful if those candidates in the moderation sample could be highlighted on the TX4 form to help with identification at Moderation.

Most centres provided clear annotation of the controlled tasks but not always. This is important at moderation so that the moderator can see how and why marks have been awarded and which four skills have been assessed in practical items. Some centres provided very detailed teacher annotation and this was very much appreciated. On the whole, teacher comments and annotation were both helpful and realistic.

Task 1

The briefs were broad and inclusive enough to embrace a diversity of folios and items, there was something for everyone, all abilities, all interests and all cultures.

There was a strong message that candidates were inspired by the briefs and enjoyed completing the folios and making the products.

Folio

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

Folios often contained thorough and interesting research and information of a very high standard and were very well presented. The majority of candidates had obviously taken great pride in their work.

Candidates showed a clear understanding of the requirements of their chosen task.

It would be advantageous to include a clear set of aims to demonstrate their organisational skills to access the higher mark grade boundaries and to give a good start as a point of reference when evaluating their work.

Some candidates failed to state their aims.

Folios displayed a far better approach to the editing of their folios 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.

It is recommended that candidates do not exceed the four A3 sheets.

Most candidates carried out relevant and meaningful investigation into fabric decorative and constructional techniques, with sound justifications for final choice.

Some candidates annotated their work by showing written information underneath the fabric or technique samples. This obviously proved most effective and economical on space. To access higher marks candidates should be encouraged to include more supportive comments for their chosen fabrics and techniques.

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 and techniques.

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. Candidates should be guided not to use additional illustrations with no annotation. Candidates need to refine their research.

Please note that within the exploration/development section of the folio, it is not required to design more than one type of item, fashion items OR items for the home. If a candidate is intending to make a cushion, then their design ideas need only concentrate on the development of cushion shapes, styles and ideas.

Evaluations were generally well written, especially where candidates had been given detailed guidance to encapsulate all the assessment criteria. The best evaluations were written under the various 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 a detailed explanation is also needed to justify its use.

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.

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

Candidates should avoid shading over or highlighting text as this sometimes makes the text difficult to read.

Folios varied considerably according to the interests and abilities of the candidates, but in the main, folios followed a coherent and logical layout enabling candidates to draw sensible conclusions and outcomes.

There were some very high quality folios from some centres reflecting the enthusiasm and interest of some candidates. 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 criteria for assessment.

Realisation

A range of outcomes were achieved resulting from clear, well directed folio research and a structured route through to the realisation.

The practical items reflected the candidates' engagement with the brief. They had been encouraged to explore topics they were interested in and their enthusiasm was obvious.

Once again, more realistic items were achieved by the majority of candidates.

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

Many items were well made and had a strong design element. It was inspiring to mark these items. Unfortunately, some candidates embarked on items that were too large and contained massive amounts of technique repetition, e.g. long seams on evening dresses. Big does not always mean better. Valuable time spent making very large items, with substantial repetition of techniques, would have been better spent perfecting the techniques chosen. Smaller, more compact items would be more suitable and cheaper to post.

Centres need to guide candidates early on, to choose smaller more manageable items, with carefully selected techniques and fabrics they can cope with. In many cases, candidates benefited from making smaller items with less repetition of techniques.

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.

The recycling brief had again been very well received and candidates researched and displayed a broad range of innovative ideas in this area.

There were some interesting recycling projects, with candidates using patchwork and quilting to create useful items for themselves and family members. Whilst it is encouraging to see creative and inventive ideas, the aspect of health and safety should also be considered. The quality of good practical textile skills should be the main focus of this examination.

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 T shirts, some knitted fabrics tend to be difficult to embellish and sew. This can inhibit the candidates ability to demonstrate the skills that are of a high standard. If candidates choose 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.

It was particularly pleasing to see a wide range of creative processes demonstrated including fabric painting, batik, dying, etc. Creative/free machine embroidery was a popular choice of technique again this year, often carried out very well.

Please note that the use of basic stenciling, using stencil pens on fabric, cannot be classed as a high quality skill. Also, the gluing of fabrics onto another fabric cannot be classed as high quality appliqué and should not be marked as such. The use of self-adhesive gems should also not be regarded as a high class skill.

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. Please note that basic computerised designs/patterns should not be considered to be in the top bracket for assessment in the chosen skill/technique section of the production.

When choosing the decorative item, it is advisable to look for the techniques which carry the highest marks; techniques with potentially higher marks had been overlooked on occasions. The use of the laser cutter in candidates' work added a different dimension and worked well with more traditional techniques.

The skills section of the assessment was often over marked. The assessment of candidates practical skills, in some cases, 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 students 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 should also be noted that the combination of two or more techniques chosen as one skill, should be avoided. Garment construction as a whole should not be assessed as one of the four skills; each skill must be a specific process.

In most cases the practical items reflected the high level of candidate interest in the task.

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 which can be accessed on the WJEC website under documents and teacher's resources. This can be used as a form of annotation and attached to the coursework.

Task 2

Again, it was pleasing to see the progression 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. Again there was something for everyone; all abilities, all interests and all cultures.

Folio

The folios accompanying Task 2, like those for Task 1, were generally well presented, informative and detailed. 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. The folios were often stimulated by the brief and many carried out relevant design work, market research and fabric testing. Please note that research into both briefs is not necessary. On the whole, the folios were interesting and a pleasure to read. The candidates had obviously been encouraged to produce colourful and clearly presented sheets. Most assessment criteria were covered comprehensively and had a good balance of text, samples and illustrations.

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 reminded to follow the Page Guideline sheet, Possible Pathway through the controlled assessment, which can be found on the WJEC website. Those who follow this sheet will cover all of the required criteria and invariably do well with folio work.

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. Not all candidates included aims. Some candidates did not understand the requirements of the brief and failed to discuss fully the outcomes of the analysis.

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. It is important to remember that the use of the research section should flow into the selecting and rejecting of design ideas.

Design proposals were mostly detailed and interesting. Candidates should be encouraged to reflect and summarise their research, which would then link into the design section.

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.

In many cases candidates displayed interesting design ideas but would benefit from refining their sketches and presentation to achieve higher marks. Candidates should be advised to use their own design sketches where possible, rather than just uploaded images, a combination of both would be acceptable.

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 candidates was very limited and did not always reflect an ongoing process. Good candidates benefit by including relevant and informed testing of fabrics (referring to the fibre content) to confirm suitability. Fabric samples should be included with the final design to help with the justification, suitability and performance characteristics of their chosen fabrics.

Candidates should be encouraged to show an awareness of named fabrics and their possible suitability for the task - this aids the selection and rejection process.

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 judgement. Higher band candidates showed excellent analysis when rejecting and selecting techniques and possible fabrics. Candidates should be advised to show that they have planned their work and investigated the suitability of their chosen fabrics and techniques to improve marks.

Candidates' evaluations continue to improve. Many evaluations were thorough and very well done. Most candidates made a reasonable attempt at justifying the planning and organisation of the task. The use of headings may help provide a focus for evaluations and ensure that all aspects, including suggestions for future development, are included. 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. Costings could also be discussed when evaluating, e.g. whether cost effective to make an item when compared to a similar bought item, as found and highlighted in the research.

Photographic evidence was widely included and very helpful to the moderation process.

Realisation

Once again, there was a wide range of challenging techniques by the candidates and it was a pleasure to see the use of traditional techniques mixed with new and innovative ideas.

A variety of different textile items were made. Candidates, on the whole, were allowed within the constraints of time and resources, to use their own creativity with some degree of originality. The practical solutions to both briefs were modern interpretations and reflected a wide range of abilities, interests and skills. The majority of candidates adopted a creative approach to the brief and explored some exciting colour combinations. 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. The time spent repeating techniques could have been used to perhaps develop the design element more. It was pleasing to see, in the majority of cases, 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.

There were many examples of candidates exploring challenging fabrics and components and attempting to complete contemporary items which would appeal to their age group.

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 soft sculpture, 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 to cover to access the full range of marks. Overly ambitious projects could disadvantage many candidates and reduce the time available to complete other features. The appropriateness of practical items did not always allow the candidates to achieve the highest marks or to complete the necessary skills to a high level. The aspect of health and safety should be considered at all times and the quality of good practical skills should be paramount and the main focus of the task.

It may be advisable to steer certain candidates to make smaller, simpler items with less challenging selection of fabrics. This would allow them to refine techniques and not be overwhelmed by tricky fabrics. It would also allow them to access higher marks.

Photographic evidence of the work also helped the moderation process a great deal.

Overall, the marking was fair and realistic, but there are still a few centres where the practical work was over marked, simple open seams, depending on how well executed, their positioning within an item and on what fabric, can influence their suitability for a higher skill level. It is also necessary to consider the amount of chosen technique and the fabric when awarding marks. It was difficult at moderation, to justify the awarding of full marks for the sewing on of one single button. Full marks should not be given for a very simple and poorly executed technique. A high level of skill must be evident to gain full marks for each skill assessed. Please note that marks awarded for overall construction should not be included under the four skills/techniques section. When marking the skills on final items it may be helpful to mark one skill for each section rather than grouping several skills together.

Candidates should be discouraged from using glue fix gems, whilst giving an aesthetic quality to the item, they are not regarded as a textile technique and may be classed as a safety hazard.

It was disappointing to note that that some of the above points regarding the marking of the four practical skills were included in last year's report and do not appear to have been addressed in some instances.

As there is no longer face to face CPD, it is recommended that centres should view exemplar work on the WJEC site, to fully appreciate the quality and precision each technique should demonstrate to merit full marks. It may also be worthwhile seeking out another WJEC Centre in your location for further collaboration.

Centres, on the whole, should be commended for encouraging a positive approach to all aspects of the coursework tasks.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk