



External Assessment Report 2010

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| Subject | Lifestyle and Consumer Technology |
| Level | Higher |

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

The number of candidates presented for Lifestyle and Consumer Technology has continued to increase. Most candidates embark on the Higher Lifestyle and Consumer Technology Course having studied Standard Grade Home Economics; however, almost 27% are direct entries with no previous experience.

The Standard of the Higher Lifestyle and Consumer Technology external assessment was the same as previous years, and the grade boundaries were not altered.

87% of candidates passed the examination. This showed the success of the candidates in this Course, which is highly relevant to current consumer issues. By examining the breakdown of the component marks, it is possible to establish the areas that should be addressed to ensure that future candidates pass the examination.

6% of the candidates were awarded a Band 8 or 9, and should maybe have been presented for Intermediate 2 Lifestyle and Consumer Technology. As the technological briefs are the same for Intermediate 2 and Higher, it is possible to drop candidates down after the prelims.

The NABs can be used as a revision tool for candidates before the examination.

Although the average mark for the question paper showed an improvement from last session, this is a trend that has been improving over a number of years. The average mark for the Technological Project showed a very slight increase. Ways of improving candidate performance can be established by following the guidance below.

The Lifestyle and Consumer Technology Course is suitable for candidates who have an interest in the home and on all that impacts on the health of the family. It is suitable for candidates who are interested in working in child care/nurseries, elderly care homes, teaching, money advice centres, consumer advice centres, or the field of social work. Given the rise in unemployment and the changing role of the family, this Course helps candidates prepare for their role as consumers or to work in this area.

Areas in which candidates performed well

Technological Project

Step 1.1

Most candidates provided good explanations of the key wording of the brief. The candidates who provided more detail in their explanations of the key points tended to demonstrate better understanding of the brief, which benefitted them at later stages of the technological project.

Step 1.2

Specification points were usually acceptable, on the whole. The candidates who developed specification points that clearly linked to the wording of the brief tended to produce better solutions in step 2.2, as their work was more focused.

Generally the candidates produced five or six specifications points, which avoided additional work at later stages.

More candidates demonstrated an understanding of measuring/testing each specification point.

Most candidates explained the importance of each specification point.

Step 1.3

Those candidates who did state the outdoor event were able to link more closely to a specific target group and to the type of food that was already available at the event.

Step 2.1

Centres that made good use of the guidance in the candidate guide provided strong investigations that produced valuable data to use when drawing up a solution.

Step 2.2

Some candidates came up with original solutions based on good research from the investigations.

The solutions were clearly linked to wording of the brief and described in detail, with detailed recipes including exact ingredients and step-by-step methods.

Step 3.1

Most candidates provided sufficient detail about how to manufacture their chosen solution to allow it to be produced by another person.

Step 3.2

When candidates prepared tests that covered all of the specifications points, this provided lots of data for evaluation against the specification in step 4.1.

Step 3.3

Candidates that made good use of the guidance in the candidate guide provided strong, valid testing that produced valuable data to use in the evaluation section, particularly step 4.1.

Step 4.1

Candidates who conducted strong testing against each of the specification points gave themselves data on which to base their evaluations.

Step 4.2

Candidates are advised to complete their evaluation for each step when they have completed the step (see candidate guide).

Areas which candidates found demanding

Technological Project

Step 1.1

Some key words were missed out — the most common was 'suitable'. There were instances of candidates incorrectly copying the brief. Care should be taken to ensure that the brief is correctly copied from the wording provided on the SQA website.

On some occasions the candidates failed to correctly demonstrate an understanding of the word 'develop', which had an impact later in the type of solution proposed.

Step 1.2

The key words that were often missed out were 'develop', 'sale', or 'event', and this carried on into step 1.3 investigations. Those candidates who gave long specification points were disadvantaged in a number of areas, as they would not fully explain or evaluate the whole specification point.

Some candidates failed to earn the marks as they did not use the correct terminology, eg 'talk to', 'get feedback', 'get an opinion', 'consult', 'visit', 'gather menus', etc. The candidates should make reference to the candidate guide and use the correct terminology for investigations or tests.

Some candidates more or less repeated their specification points in the explanation, and with no further explanation they earned no marks in this section.

Step 1.3

Key words which were missed in the specifications and were also omitted in the investigations were 'sale', 'event', and 'outdoor'. This may have been because these key words were omitted from their specification.

A number of candidates did not show that they were linking or investigating to collect data in relation to all of their specification points.

Quite a few candidates did not give any detail as to what the outdoor event was. If they had, it might have given a greater focus to their work.

Step 2.1

Some candidates provided minimal investigations which did not allow sufficient data to be collected to allow the creation of interesting solutions.

Probably the weakest area was conclusions, where personal opinions were given but the conclusion was not based on results of investigation or linked to the impact on the possible solution.

Step 2.2

Some candidates failed to develop or create new food products. This fails to meet the wording of the brief, where the candidates were asked to 'develop' a new dish or food product.

Candidates should be reminded that they should use metric measurements.

Step 3.1

Candidates are reminded they should include the date. Some candidates failed to provide sufficient detail to allow the preparation of the solution, eg lack of detail of preparation of vegetables.

Step 3.2

Testing was still confused in a few cases with technique. Questions or tests did not focus on the specification points, which then of course did not allow an evaluation in the next stage to be based on evidence.

Step 3.3

Some candidates failed to identify the details of the expert they were interviewing.

Step 4.1

Some candidates quoted from the teachers' answers in the tests instead of evaluating the information.

Evaluations were not backed up by testing etc, and often included personal opinions and inaccurate interpretation of results. There was not always evidence of costing to back up evaluation in some projects.

Step 4.2

Many candidates gave unsupported, personal comments/statements. The candidates do not understand how to write an evaluative comment. Many candidates spoke about previous experience in Standard Grade or Intermediate 2 Hospitality practical cookery. This is not evidence that can be used as the basis of the evaluations. Many candidates spoke of really enjoying the practical cookery part and finishing early, which is not relevant.

This was a really poor area, where the consequence part was frequently missed.

Question paper

These comments should be read in conjunction with the examination paper and the marking instructions which are available on the SQA website. The comments include areas where candidates performed well and areas they found demanding, and so helps provide guidance on improving candidate performance.

Literacy

On some occasions candidates could not access the marks as they failed to understand what the question was asking, eg 'property of wool'. This can be tackled by allowing candidates access to past papers and marking instructions. Candidates could be issued with a booklet comprising all past papers and one copy of up-to-date marking instructions, so that they can see how they should be formulating their answers to access the marks.

Section A

- ◆ Question 1: well answered.
- ◆ Question 2: well answered.
- ◆ Question 3: well answered.
- ◆ Question 4: gap in knowledge for a number of candidates.
- ◆ Question 5: well answered.
- ◆ Question 6: poor knowledge of this abbreviation. Learn all the abbreviations — those tested are in bold in the Course content grids.
- ◆ Question 7: poor knowledge by a number of candidates.
- ◆ Question 8: a number of the Lifestyle and Consumer Technology candidates do not know the areas covered by this Act. This is a key area of Course work — candidates will be tested on some of the Acts each year. This is an area of weakness.
- ◆ Question 9: most candidates had knowledge of this area but some referred to contamination rather than cross contamination.
- ◆ Question 10: well answered.
- ◆ Question 11: some candidates have no knowledge of the Consumers' Association. *Which?* magazine can now be viewed online.
- ◆ Question 12: well answered.
- ◆ Question 13: well answered — candidates must make clear which answer is an advantage and which one is the disadvantage.
- ◆ Question 14: well answered — candidates must make clear which answer is an advantage and which one is the disadvantage.

General comments

- ◆ Practice all previous Section A questions.
- ◆ Make up your own Section A questions.
- ◆ Practice relevant Section A questions from either Health and Food Technology or Fashion and Textile Technology.
- ◆ Sentences are not required for seven questions.
- ◆ Check the wording of questions — is the question asking for a benefit, a cause, a way, etc.

- ◆ When advantages and disadvantages are given, candidates must give the heading or an indication of which is a positive and which a negative response.
- ◆ Some centres that have practised Section A score well, eg most candidates score above 15/20.

Section B

Question 1: compulsory question

| Question | Facts about performance | Action required |
|----------|--|---|
| 1 (a) | <p>Most candidates gained full marks for identifying the factors affecting choice of clothes.</p> <p>A large percentage earned the marks for explanations of the factors.</p> <p>Answers for this question were well laid out, with clear factors and separate explanations.</p> | <p>Candidates must ensure they provide explanations which refer to school clothing. Some candidates did not gain marks if they failed to do this or if their explanations were too vague.</p> |
| 1 (b) | <p>Candidates failed to gain full marks for this question, as they often failed to evaluate. The candidates could list facts but not evaluate each service for the family. Some candidates gave one point for each service.</p> <p>No marks are awarded for statements of fact in evaluation questions.</p> <p>Candidates tended to answer about statutory education services better than statutory housing services, as they often confused this service with the Shelter organisation.</p> | <p>Candidates should be given opportunities to practice and develop skills of evaluation.</p> <p>Candidates should use the mark allocation to determine how much they should write for their responses.</p> |
| 1 (c) | <p>Good understanding of the effects of unemployment on family life.</p> <p>Answers for this question were well laid out, with clear factors and separate explanations.</p> | |
| 1 (d) | <p>Candidates who provided a correct fact linked to the method of payment and then an opinion and an appropriate consequence earned the marks.</p> <p>Candidates who provided statements of facts did not earn the marks. On some occasions candidates provided the opinion and the fact but not the consequence.</p> <p>Some candidates had little understanding of saving cards, or confused saving cards with savings accounts in a bank.</p> | <p>Candidates should use the code given against the mark allocation and the wording of the question to make sure they provide all stages of the evaluation answer.</p> <p>The practice question is linked to other methods of payment identified in Course content grids.</p> |

Choice Questions

Question 2

| Question | Facts about performance | Action required |
|----------|---|--|
| 2 (a) | Candidates demonstrated knowledge of a wide range of different factors that impacted on the physical and mental health of the elderly. | Similar questions could be practiced for different family members. |
| 2 (b) | <p>Most candidates who implemented the stages of evaluation — and so covered all the required areas and referred to the elderly man — earned full marks.</p> <p>Candidates who have not been taught to follow the answering technique often fail to score significant marks. Some candidates fail to provide the consequence for health.</p> <p>On a few occasions some candidates failed to have the required knowledge of nutrition.</p> | <p>Candidates must provide all stages of the answer: an opinion based on the data on the table linked to the person in the wording of the question. They must then demonstrate their knowledge of the function of the nutrient and then provide a consequence in relation to the impact on this person's health.</p> <p>As this question is testing evaluation skills linked to knowledge in relation to the nutritional needs of an elderly man, the 80-year-old man should be used in the answer.</p> <p>On occasion, some candidates do not have sufficient knowledge about the impact of too much or too little of a nutrient on the person in the question, ie the elderly man.</p> |
| 2 (c) | <p>Candidates did not always appreciate the range of foods that could be classed as 'ready prepared'. This may have helped them formulate a wider range of answers.</p> <p>Some of the answers showed good understanding of health issues of the elderly that could be helped by the use of ready prepared foods. A number of candidates failed to provide sufficient answers to earn all the marks.</p> <p>Often the candidates provided opinion and facts but no consequences for the elderly. Some answers contained just facts and made no attempt to evaluate.</p> | <p>Use the mark allocation to establish how many answers to provide.</p> <p>Candidates should use the code given against the mark allocation and the wording of the question to make sure they provide all stages of the evaluation answer, and link their answers to the needs of the elderly.</p> |

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| 2 (d) | Generally poor knowledge of these topics in relation to the impact on the environment. | Increase knowledge of these key areas, and then candidates may understand the impact on the environment. |
| 2 (e) | Few candidates had knowledge about the areas of responsibilities of the Food Standards Agency. They often got confused with the role of the Environmental Health Department. | Candidates must learn the roles of each of the organisations identified in the Course content grids. |

Question 3

| Question | Facts about performance | Action required |
|----------|---|--|
| 3 (a) | Candidates who made reference to the backpack seemed to be able to focus their answers on the product, and this helped them earn more marks. The one stage that caused confusion was 'first production run'. | Practice food- or textile-focused products in the different styles of this question, which appears frequently. |
| 3 (b) | Well answered — candidates demonstrated good evaluation skills by showing an understanding of various ways the backpack could be used. | Practice food- or textile-focused products in the different styles of this question, which appears frequently. |
| 3 (c) | Candidates had learned some facts about elastane, but often failed to evaluate and show an understanding of its use in clothing for a cyclist. | Candidates should use the code given against the mark allocation and the wording of the question to make sure they provide all stages of the evaluation answer, and link their answers to the clothing for cyclists. |
| 3 (d) | This question was well answered and showed good understanding of school meals. If candidates did not link to the benefit to the family, they did not score marks. | Candidates who laid out the answer well and referred to the benefit to the family scored more marks. |
| 3e | Some understanding shown of the Food Safety Act 1990. Answers had to refer to how they protected the consumer. Some candidates were confused by the Environmental Health Department. | Candidates must learn the protection offered by each of the Acts, as identified in the Course content grids. At least one tends to be tested each year. |

Question 4

| Question | Facts about performance | Action required |
|----------|---|--|
| 4 (a) | Well answered. | Key area of knowledge that is often tested in Question 1. |
| 4 (b) | <p>Poorly answered as candidates did not always show knowledge of the dietary targets. The full target is required at this level.</p> <p>Candidates failed to consider the ingredients that could have been included in the vegetable lasagne, eg selection of vegetables, sheets of pasta and cheese sauce, which would have given them more to write about. A number of candidates only gave three points in their answers.</p> | <p>Practice this question using a variety of different menus.</p> <p>Candidates should use the code given against the mark allocation and the wording of the question to make sure they provide all stages of the evaluation answer.</p> |
| 4 (c) | Candidates who had learned this area of Course content answered this well. Marks were given when candidates provided explanations rather than just stated facts. | Candidates must learn the function/roles of each of the organisations identified in the Course content grids. |
| 4 (d) | Most parts of these questions were well answered and evaluated. There was sometimes confusion between nutrition labelling and other ingredients, as answers were often linked to allergies. | Candidates should use the code given against the mark allocation and the wording of the question to make sure they provide all stages of the evaluation answer. This question can be repeated for food or textile labels. |
| 4 (e) | Well answered — candidates who laid out their questions well tended to access all the marks. | Practice this question for all dietary conditions. Answers can focus on both dietary and lifestyle factors. |

Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Technological Project

Centres must ensure they use the up-to-date version of the teacher guide and candidate guide for the Technological Project, which can be downloaded from the SQA website. This will be available when the new briefs are published. Please ensure that the updated pro forma is used.

Candidates should check that each step has been completed in line with the guidance in the document to ensure they maximise the marks they earn.

Candidates may find it helpful to identify a target group for their project, as this may help them to focus on the needs of this particular group and so produce a more in-depth piece of work.

Candidates should take responsibility for checking that each page of the project has been correctly collated and is included in the final work submitted to the SQA.

Complete the evaluation of each step of the technological project at the time identified in the candidate guide. Candidates should make sure that they write their evaluations based on evidence.

The Technological Project should meet the requirements of the Unit specification so that the NAB pass can be awarded.

If you have presented candidates for three years, you are encouraged to become involved in the marking of the Technological Project so that you have a greater understanding of how candidates gain marks. Markers always state how valuable marking is in helping to raise their candidates' attainment. Information on how to apply to become a Marker can be found on the SQA website in the Appointee Management section.

Although the marking instructions for the projects are available on the SQA website, candidates should be encouraged to come up with their own specification points, investigations, and tests, which will then be more clearly focused on the wording of the brief.

Question Paper

Candidates who have applied the correct answering technique achieve a higher mark than those from centres where there has been less emphasis on answering technique. Those candidates who could answer evaluation questions correctly in the choice questions tended to score higher total marks for their papers.

Candidates should use the mark allocation to establish how many answers they should provide. In some areas too much was written, and in other areas there was not enough written.

Create a well balanced prelim which meets the correct paper specification. This will prepare the candidates well for the written examination. This can also be used to generate evidence for absentee candidates and appeals, if necessary.

Encourage candidates to use the SQA website for past papers, update letters, marking instructions, Understanding Standards materials, etc.

Practice all past Section A questions and encourage candidates to create their own Section A questions. Candidates who are well prepared for Section A demonstrate a wide knowledge of the Course content and may therefore perform well in the rest of the paper. When collating the questions for the prelim, ensure the questions are progressively more difficult towards the end.

The questions towards the end of Section A are more difficult and require more detail when they have the following wording: advantage, disadvantage, explain, benefit, etc.

Practice Section B, Question 1, to ensure that the candidates are familiar with the areas tested in this area. (See the specification for the Lifestyle and Consumer Technology paper.)

Although candidates use evaluation skills in Question 1, they often do not apply the same answering technique in the choice questions. The candidates frequently have the knowledge, but because they fail to evaluate they lose valuable marks.

A number of candidates did not know the whole dietary targets in sufficient detail for Higher. 'Five-a-day' is not acceptable at Higher level. Candidates should know the full target, eg 'increase consumption of fruit and vegetables to 400g per day'. There is even confusion between nutrients and food categories which are used by candidates to create new targets.

Allowing candidates to mark a copy of a candidate question paper illustrates how marks are lost and gained, which is useful in training candidates on answering techniques.

Candidates can make use of bullet points to reduce the amount of writing and so save time, but must still ensure that they refer to the wording of the question.

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology can use some questions from either the Health and Food Technology or the Fashion and Textile Technology papers as additional sources of questions for homework, etc.

An excellent way to prepare candidates is to ensure they sit a valid prelim with similar styles of questions to the current questions, so it would be advisable to compile questions from the previous three or four years. Ensure Question 1 meets the specification for this question and that the overall totals are correct. Use the information at the back of the marking instructions. Avoid issues linked to 'en bloc' by avoiding using a complete question from any previous paper. Mix up questions from previous papers. It would be useful, but not essential, to change the focus of the questions, eg if the question is focused on a backpack, change the question to one on sleeping bags.

Half marks have not been used for a number of years, and questions using half marks should be changed to one-mark questions in line with the current papers.

Examine the current year's marking instructions for Higher Lifestyle and Consumer Technology. This is the standard that should be applied when marking previous questions and prelims. When previous marking instructions were written, they were sometimes written as outline instructions, and do not provide as much detail as current instructions.

If you have taught the Higher Course for a minimum of three years, the best way to raise attainment is to apply to mark the question paper. See the Appointee Management section on SQA's website for details.

Statistical information: update on Courses

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| Number of resulted entries in 2009 | 294 |
| Number of resulted entries in 2010 | 325 |

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

| Distribution of Course awards | % | Cum. % | Number of candidates | Lowest mark |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------|----------------------|-------------|
| Maximum mark — 150 | | | | |
| A | 33.5% | 33.5% | 109 | 105 |
| B | 28.6% | 62.2% | 93 | 90 |
| C | 24.6% | 86.8% | 80 | 75 |
| D | 6.2% | 92.9% | 20 | 67 |
| No award | 7.1% | 100.0% | 23 | – |

General commentary on grade boundaries

While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.

Each year, therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Head of Service and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.

The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.

Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in say Higher Chemistry this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related as they do not contain identical questions.

SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as Arrangements evolve and change.