



National Qualifications 2009

Internal Assessment Report: Home Economics

Assessment Panel: Home Economics

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to centres on verification in National Qualifications in this subject.

Standard Grade

Element/Coursework verified

Practical and organisational skills course objectives — 5, 6, and 7

Feedback to centres

General comments

Despite the changes to the guidance documents five years ago, some centres are still using the old pro forma and assessment structure for the practical assignment — course objective 7. Please use the up-to-date information, which can be found on SQA's website.

There are excellent practical skills and standards of hygiene and safety being demonstrated by candidates in many of the centres visited. The majority of centres visited are marking to standard and are very well organised.

Advice on good practice and areas for further development

Course Objective 7 — the practical assignment

- ◆ The wording of the brief — centres are free to use the suggested briefs in the Arrangements document, or their own. It is suggested that a lower number of words should be used in the brief rather than the maximum of eight.
- ◆ 'Make healthy items for the school canteen' would be more straightforward for the candidates to explain in the planning section than a brief with lengthier wording. Some centres are making the wording of the brief too long and creating extra work for the candidates.
- ◆ **Analysing** — most candidates are able to identify all the key points of the brief and provide explanations for each of the key points. Some candidates are providing statements rather than explanations for how the key points link to the assignment brief.
- ◆ **Planning** — recipes chosen must try to ensure that the minimum 100 minutes of practical work is filled for the carrying out strand of the assignment. Candidates who do not fill the time with practical activity will not gain as high a grade as a candidate who has used their time efficiently.
- ◆ **Explanations** should be provided for why the items chosen link to or meet the key/additional points. Candidates are still making statements here rather than giving explanations.
- ◆ **Evaluating** — two points of evaluation are required for each of the areas of the assignment to gain Credit level grade 1. An evaluative comment should contain the linking words — 'as', 'so', 'to', 'because', 'which' or 'therefore' in order to make the comment evaluative. Many candidates are writing comments in an evaluative way, but others would benefit from some practice in this area.

Course objectives 5 and 6 — the practical exercise

- ◆ Overall a high skill level is being shown by candidates. Many candidates are very well organised and prepared for the practical exercises they undertake.
- ◆ The Arrangements document on SQA's website can be referred to for the level potential for various combinations of recipes.
- ◆ Some centres are still unsure about the combination of recipes/skills there should be to gain credit level in a practical exercise.
- ◆ Dovetailing of tasks in the recipes chosen is essential for Credit level to be gained in a practical exercise.
- ◆ Most candidates are choosing appropriate recipes for their skill level, but others are choosing above or below their ability level and not achieving their full potential as a consequence.
- ◆ Candidates can be advised about appropriate choices of dishes for a practical exercise.

Course objective 5 — to acquire practical skills

- ◆ A holistic judgement based on the overall performance in practical skills carried out in the practical exercise — **how**.
- ◆ Poorer performance in one skill can be balanced by good performance in another — absolute perfection is not required for a grade 1.
- ◆ The degree of co-ordination overall determines the level — **C = high / G = satisfactory / F = limited**.
- ◆ Co-ordination in this context relates to dexterity and judgement, accuracy, efficiency in relation to use of tools and equipment, measuring, controlling processes and **the standard achieved**.
- ◆ The level of competence within the level determines the grade — **basic = lower grade and high = upper grade**.
- ◆ A skills checklist is not required for each exercise. Make a judgement based on the co-ordination and competence you see for the skills over the complete exercise.
- ◆ The grade for CO5 is affected by the nature of the practical exercise. There is less scope for judgement, efficiency, etc in a simple practical exercise. Credit level would not be awarded for course objective 5 in a practical exercise with potential at Foundation level.

Course objective 6 — to carry out a practical exercise

- ◆ **What** the candidate attempts — combination of skills and complexity of the exercise within the available time determines the **level**.
- ◆ **How** the candidate carries out the exercise — in relation to rhythm and pace, ordering of tasks (dovetailing), choice of tools and equipment, and health and safety — determines the **grade**.
- ◆ Practical exercises should reflect the different ability levels of the pupils F/G/C.
- ◆ Pupils should not **all** be carrying out the same practical exercise.
- ◆ Pupils should have choice, but restrict the recipe options at each level due to food ordering/wastage etc.