

Principal Assessor Report 2003

Assessment Panel:

Home Economics

Qualification area:

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
Included in this report**

Home Economics:
Fashion and Textile Technology
Health and Food Technology
Lifestyle and Consumer Technology

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2002	Health and Food Technology: 15 Lifestyle and Consumer Technology: 3
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Number of entries in 2003	Fashion and Textile Technology: 2 Health and Food Technology: 13 Lifestyle and Consumer Technology: 4
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General comments re entry numbers

This is the first year that candidates have been presented for all three contexts.

Fashion and Textile Technology — Two centres each presented one candidate.

Health and Food Technology — Seven centres presented a total of 13 candidates. This was a slight drop in candidate numbers in this context as compared to last year.

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology — Two centres presented a total of 4 candidates. This was one candidate more than last year.

Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

Fashion and Textile Technology	maximum mark 200
Health and Food Technology	(question paper mark is scaled to 100 marks by SQA)
Lifestyle and Consumer Technology	

	Mark (lowest)
Upper A	170
Lower A	140
B	120
C	100

General commentary on passmarks and grade boundaries

- While SQA aims to set examinations and create mark schemes which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum 50% of the available marks (notional passmark) and a very well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70%, it is almost impossible to get the standard absolutely on target every year, in every subject and level
- Each year we therefore hold a passmark meeting for each subject at each level where we bring together all the information available (statistical and judgmental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the senior management team at SQA
- We adjust the passmark downwards if there is evidence that we have set a slightly more demanding exam than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance
- We adjust the passmark upwards if there is evidence that we have set a slightly less demanding exam than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance
- Where the standard appears to be very similar to previous years, we maintain similar grade boundaries
- 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 are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. And just because SQA has altered a boundary in a particular year in say Higher Chemistry 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
- Our main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain standards across the years, even as syllabuses evolve and change

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

Grade boundaries have been set in line with standardised 'a priori' boundaries.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Question Paper — FTT/HFT/LCT

Candidates still tended to list knowledge rather than apply knowledge to what is asked in the question. In the critical discussion type questions candidates often failed to provide critical analysis. Discussion lacked the appropriate depth required at Advanced Higher level.

Dissertations

Dissertations were well presented and the standard of English was satisfactory. Candidates had attempted to research the chosen topics but still experienced difficulty using the information collected to produce a well referenced piece of work.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Question Paper

Fashion and Textile Technology

- ◆ Section A was reasonably well answered by candidates.
- ◆ Section B — Question 1 (b) was fairly well answered by candidates
- Question 2 one candidate's response showed good application of knowledge

Health and Food Technology

- ◆ Section A — (a) and (b) well answered by candidates.
- ◆ Section B — Question 1(a) was well answered by candidates
- ◆ Section B — Question 3 was generally well answered although there was some repetition within responses

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology

- ◆ Section B Question 1 (a) was well answered. Candidates interpreted the data well and gave reasoned responses
- ◆ Question 5 — housing needs were addressed quite well
- ◆ Generally responses were well written and logically presented

Dissertation — FTT/HFT/LCT

Introduction

- ◆ Key issues were usually identified and discussed. Some candidates demonstrated a wide range of reading

Results

- ◆ Results generally well presented with good use of Information Technology.

Conclusions

Some candidates tried to relate conclusions to the objectives and tried to identify the limitations of research. However, more detail is still needed in this area.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Question Paper

Fashion and Textile Technology

Section A (b) Knowledge of fibre developments poor.

Health and Food Technology

Section A — (c) Candidates did not link their answers to “health and lifestyle changes ” as stated in the question. Candidates included dietary factors within their responses.

Section B

Question 1(b) — A lack of depth of knowledge and detail in relation to the contribution of fruit and vegetables to diet and health. Candidates’ responses mainly focussed on Non-Starch Polysaccharide (NSP) content with little reference to the contribution of anti oxidants.

Question 5 — responses did not link to each stage of life.

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology

Section B

Question 1(b) — level of knowledge of different sources of demographic data was very weak although this part of the course content is an important area which should also be relevant to the dissertation.

Question 5 — answers did not always relate to a wheel chair user specifically. Responses linked to food preparation, related too much to diet rather than needs relating to the preparation of foods.

Dissertations — FTT/HFT/LCT

General points

- ◆ Lack of citing of references throughout the dissertation. Where references were not cited sufficiently, dissertations tended to lack theoretical background and research evidence to support issues being addressed.
- ◆ Where references were cited the correct format was not always followed.
- ◆ Cited references were not always included in the Reference List at the end of the dissertation.
- ◆ Some candidates included a bibliography — this is not required. This was given in a few instances instead of a reference list. Centres should refer to the Notes of Guidance for Teachers/ Lecturers/ Candidates for clarification.

Introduction

- ◆ Objectives lacked justification

Methodology

- ◆ Candidates work lacked sufficient detail and explanation of procedures. The detail must be sufficient for the research to be carried out by someone else
- ◆ Limited justification for approaches and no reference to cited sources
- ◆ Some candidates attempted to carry out too much during the primary research

Results

- ◆ Some candidates failed to quantify their results so ensuring clarity
- ◆ Where results were presented in graphical/tabulated format, the relevant key results were not stated explicitly

Conclusions

- ◆ Still tended to be a summary of results rather than a discussion of the findings and supporting comments with cited references
- ◆ Statements were not always based on evidence and included personal comment

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Question Paper — FTT/HFT/LCT

- ◆ Section A (a) Candidates should outline five responses. Some candidates are still spending a disproportionate length of time on this area and are providing too many responses
- ◆ Candidates should relate their responses and apply knowledge to what is asked in the question. Candidates should only include relevant information in their responses.
- ◆ Candidates should be encouraged to use bullet points which would help avoid repetition within responses
- ◆ A level of depth and detail appropriate for AH level should be included in the discussion of the responses
- ◆ Critical discussion/analysis should include both positive and negative argument — centres should refer to the document — Evaluation Skills in Home Economics — for further guidance

Dissertation — FTT/HFT/LCT

- ◆ References should be correctly cited throughout the dissertation
- ◆ Full reference details should be supplied in the Reference List
- ◆ Justification should be included to support the choice of objectives and methodology.
- ◆ Methodology should supply sufficient details of the primary research to allow someone else to repeat the research
- ◆ Results should be quantified and relevant key results should be stated explicitly under graphs/tables/charts
- ◆ Conclusions should provide a discussion of the main findings of the research process and be based on evidence found within the dissertation
- ◆ Centres should refer to the Guidance notes for Candidates/Teachers and Lecturers so ensuring that the candidates follow the correct stages in the dissertation