

## Principal Assessor Report 2004

**Assessment Panel:**

**Home Economics**

**Qualification area**

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

**Home Economics:  
Lifestyle and Consumer Technology - Higher**

### Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2003	156
---------------------------	-----

Number of entries in 2004	155
---------------------------	-----

### General comments re entry numbers

The total of centres presenting candidates for Higher Home Economics examinations was 158.

Number of centres presenting Higher Home Economics:

Health & Food Technology: 118

Fashion & Textile Technology: 12

Lifestyle & Consumer Technology: 29

Centres offering two contexts:

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology *plus* Health and Food Technology : 5

Fashion & Textile Technology *plus* Health and Food Technology: 5

This session no centres presented in all three contexts.

It was positive to see there were a number of centres presenting Higher for the first time.

Health and Food Technology: 11

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology: 6

Fashion and Textile Technology: 2

The number of candidates presented in Lifestyle and Consumer Technology has remained the same and therefore maintains the slight trend in growth from previous years.

## Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

### Distribution of awards

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates
A	25.8	25.8	40
B	32.9	58.7	51
C	18.7	77.4	29
D	6.5	83.9	10
No award	16.1	100	25

### Comments on any significant changes in percentages or distribution of awards

- There was a increase in the number of candidates that scored an A pass.
- Lower percentage of candidates scored a B or C pass
- Slight increase in the number of candidates with no award.

## Grade boundaries for each subject area included in the report

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	25.8	25.8	40	105
B	39.2	58.7	51	90
C	18.7	77.4	29	75
D	6.5	83.9	10	
No award	16.1	100	25	

### 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 arrangements evolve and change.

### Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

Standardised 'a priori' Boundary Grades were set this year.

Question papers and their associated marking instructions are designed to be at the required standard and to meet the assessment specification for the subject/level concerned.

For National Courses the examination paper is set in order that a score of 50% of the total marks for all components merits a grade C (based on the grade descriptions for that grade), and similarly a score of 70% for grade A.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

#### Technological Project

##### General observations

Brief 1 – Develop an item for a teenager to encourage a healthy lifestyle

Brief 2 – Develop a low cost item to be included in a product range for students.

##### Word processing

Given the number of technological projects that were word processed the spelling and grammar had a number of mistakes. Candidates should be reminded about the spell/grammar check facility available on PC's. There is a need for candidates to proof read their technological projects prior to submission.

The use of rainbow fonts throughout the work or pale coloured ink for printing should be discouraged as it makes it difficult for markers to read the work.

##### English

Sentence construction and spelling was often remarked as being poor.

##### Additional General Points

Candidates should know the dietary targets in detail as an area of course content at Higher therefore there should be no need to investigate this area.

##### Step 1.1 Identification of the key points

- The correct word has to be given to candidates or they will be disadvantaged. Omitting one word penalising the candidates.
- Generally key points were well identified although some candidates failed to identify an additional key point and therefore lost one mark.
- Some candidates provided up to 6 additional key points. This makes it more difficult to earn all the marks at the next step.
- Explanations should show understanding of their importance in relation to the wording of the brief. Although only brief explanations are required candidates who gave slightly more information seemed to have a clearer understanding of the complexity of the work.
- A few candidates are still giving dictionary definitions which are not acceptable.

##### Step 1.2 Appropriate criteria for the specification

- Candidates should take care to ensure that they are not using the exact wording from the brief in the development of their specification points. They gain more marks if they provide more detail than the brief.
- Note: for Higher a five points specification is required. Full marks cannot be gained if a four point specification is provided.
- If a specification point is identified in relation to cost the candidate will need to carry out a costing exercise as a method of measuring or testing. Often the candidates fail to do this.
- A specification point should be worded correctly e.g. 'must contain a rich source of iron'; 'be aesthetically appealing to teenagers' etc.
- Specifications which were more specific to the key points allowed the candidates to keep focused and allowed more suitable solutions to be devised.
- Some candidates are confused between dietary targets and nutrition.
- Some candidates provided a specification which contained too many specification points and therefore meant they gave themselves additional work and possibly lost marks.
- Explanations can occasionally be weak. They should provide some reasoning which takes account of the key points.
- A number of candidates omitted 'links to the key points' because they did not know how to complete it.
- Measuring is still an area of weakness. Candidates are identifying investigations and not tests. Measuring is a way of testing whether the specification point has been met. The target group or expert who is going to be used to carry out the testing should be identified.

##### Step 1.3 Overall plan for investigations

- Candidates should be reminded that the purpose of the plan is to allow them to carry out a series of investigations to allow them to collect data so that a solution can be developed which meets their specification. Therefore the investigations should be developed from the specification. Sometimes not all

the specification points were covered.

- There should be at least five investigations in the plan at higher.
- Some candidates produced less than five and therefore lost marks.
- There should be a clear aim for each investigation.
- The technique should be identified briefly and must identify the target group or details of the expert used to collect the data.
- Justifications were often general, did not focus clearly on the investigation and were lacking in depth. Justification can be provided in terms of the choice of investigation or technique selected.
- Page 8 is very important. The candidate must clearly identify the three investigations selected. The wording of these aims is used at the next stage of marking.

### **Step 2.1 Implement the overall plan for investigation**

Investigations are marked on the following areas:

#### **Aim:**

- Has the candidate achieved their aim as stated on page 8? Many candidates fail to do everything they plan and therefore lose marks.

#### **Brief, concise and easy to interpret.**

- The results should fit into one page and be easy to understand. Where bar charts etc are used they should have keys and scales clearly identified. Reducing the size of the font to make the work fit into the page should be avoided.

#### **Validity of results**

- A number of candidates lost marks because the investigations are not valid. They should state the website that they have used and the title of the person that they interviewed. Questionnaires should involve 20 people. On occasion work is not relevant to the brief. A number of candidates have provided summaries of their work, therefore there is no evidence of the work and the marker cannot give credit for validity of results.

#### **Conclusions**

- Conclusions can only be drawn on evidence that has been recorded as evidence in the investigation.
- Conclusions should record the findings that are relevant to the final solution. Conclusions should be based on results and not involve personal opinion. A number of candidates failed to draw conclusions and just repeated the results and so this is an area of weakness.
- The most able candidates used the results of one investigation to narrow down the area of the investigation for the subsequent investigations.

#### **Number of investigations**

- The candidate is only required to carry out three investigations although they can choose to carry out less than three if they wish. However candidates who choose to carry out more than three will find in future that the additional investigations will not be marked.

#### **Presentation**

- Some candidates used ICT to present the results of investigations which caused difficulties when interpreting results. Where ICT is used tables, charts etc should provide a key and be easy to understand.

### **Step 2.2 Derive a solution from the investigations**

- The candidate should be able to examine the **three** conclusions from their investigations and then come up with the solution. There are still candidates who are not linking their chosen solution to the investigation results.
- A number of centres allowed their candidates to propose and test more than one version of a solution. This is not permitted. The candidate must only derive **one** solution.
- Assuming that the candidates were working on this technological project independently it is surprising that in some centres all the candidates were producing similar solutions.
- In food based solutions the markers would like to see a recipe with a list of ingredients and exact weights.
- Candidates should be reminded that they are not permitted to use imperial or American measures and will be penalised. Where recipes have been sourced that contain these measurements they should be converted to metric measurements.
- In textile based solutions the markers would like to see an indication of the dimensions and types of materials/ trimmings etc selected. Samples of materials could be included. Some candidates produced some very clear illustrations of their proposed solution.

### **Step 3.1 Manufacture the chosen solution**

Time plans did not always contain dates, timing of lessons and duration of processes to manufacture the

solution. There was insufficient breakdown of times and this area needs to be addressed. Some candidates produced a general plan rather than a plan for manufacture.

- Resource lists frequently omitted types and colours of fabric, width and lengths of fabric.
- Candidates working with textiles should identify the correct type of scissors.
- Resource list should identify all the ingredients required and the exact weights.

### **Step 3.2 Derive tests for the manufactured solution**

The planned tests should allow an objective assessment of the manufactured item against some or all of the specification points. When using an expert to test the success of the finished item the title of the expert should be specified e.g. retailer in a children's toy shop etc.

- Where a nutritional analysis is used the validity of the results must be checked for suitability with some type of nutrition expert e.g. a dietician/ food technologist/ head of catering in school etc.

### **Step 3.3 Implement the tests for the manufactured solution**

Questions used in testing were often weak and lacked sufficient depth to obtain constructive comments and feedback that would suggest possible areas for modification. Occasionally summaries of results were displayed with no information on how the averages were arrived at. Some results such as pie charts were not quantified.

- Depth at testing allows the candidate to write a more detailed evaluation against each specification point.
- Some candidates showed more understanding about testing as they had had previous experience with carrying out investigations.

### **Step 4.1 Evaluation**

- Candidates lost marks because they offered personal opinion on the success of their solution. They are required to provide an evaluation based on evidence that can be found in the technological project either through the results of testing or possibility even their investigations.
- Candidates should be encouraged to use the evaluation words. Evaluations were brief and few candidates managed to earn the additional mark for detail.

### **Step 4.2 Review**

Centres are reminded that each step of the technological project should be reviewed using evidence in the work of the technological project and making use of skills and abilities, time and resources. Step 1.3 and step 3.2 often contained a review of carrying out the plan rather than a review of implementing the plan.

- Candidates often made general sweeping statements that could not be backed up by evidence in their Technological Project. They are reminded that they are asked to review their ability to carry out their technological project.

## Lifestyle and Consumer Technology 2004

### Section A

1. State two factors which may contribute to obesity. 1
- Well answered
2. State two factors which affect the energy requirement of individuals. 1
- Well answered
3. Name two religions where may influence the choice of clothing. 1
- Well answered
4. State two statutory pieces of information found on food labels. 1
- Well answered
5. Identify two aids to independent living for the elderly. 1
- Aids were not identified. Candidates identified agencies or organisations that could help the elderly.
6. State one term of the Trade Description Act 1968. 1
- Terms of act not stated
7. a) What does the abbreviation BSI stand for? 1
- Limited knowledge
- b) Explain the role of the BSI. 1
- Limited knowledge
8. State two benefits of exercise. 2
- Well answered
9. State one advantage and one disadvantage of packaging. 2
- Well answered
10. Give one advantage and one disadvantage of using a credit card. 2
- Generally well answered
11. State two effects unemployment may have on family lifestyle. 2
- Generally well answered
12. State one advantage and one disadvantage to the consumer of using organic food. 2
- Generally well answered
13. Explain the terms
- a) civil law
- b) criminal law. 2
- Most candidates did not answer this question correctly.

### Section B

#### Question 1

- a) A student has recently moved into a flat in the city.  
Discuss how the following factors may influence his choice of goods and services.
- i) economic circumstances
- ii) state of health. 4
- Candidates who made reference to specific examples relevant to the needs of students gained marks.
  - A number of answers were vague and therefore did not gain marks.
  - Little understanding shown of the circumstances of students in answers.
  - Answers on health issues were better than answers about economic circumstances.
- b) Food bills are a major item of expenditure in most households.  
Identify and discuss four ways a student may reduce food costs. 6
- Generally a good understanding/explanation of ways of reducing food costs was demonstrated by the candidates.
- c) This student is considering purchasing a combination microwave oven.  
Evaluate the suitability of this type of appliance for a young person living alone. 4
- Answers should have been evaluative and show an understanding of the needs of a young person living alone.
  - Answers often contained statements rather than evaluations.
  - Little understanding of a combination microwave oven.

- d) A store is offering a combination microwave oven on a six month interest free credit option. Evaluate the suitability of this method of payment by a student. 2**
- Some candidates appeared to think that six months interest free means that they do not need to pay anything for six months and then pay it all off in one lump sum.
  - Poor understanding shown.
  - Poor evaluation skills demonstrated.
- e) Discuss four practical steps a student could take to prevent getting into debt. 4**
- Some candidates listed four points. They were asked to discuss and therefore earned no marks.
  - The answers should have taken account of the circumstances of students.

### Question 2

The majority of the candidates answered this question.

- a) The table shows a day's nutrient content of meals eaten by a pregnant woman. Using your knowledge of nutrition and the information provided evaluate the suitability of this intake. 6**
- A number of candidates answered this question well by showing a good grasp of the answering technique.
  - However there are still some candidates who are not using the answering technique and therefore failed to gain these marks.
  - Some answers were very long and candidates need to be careful they do not spend too long earning these six marks.
  - Occasionally candidates did not make direct reference to the baby or pregnant woman and therefore failed to earn the marks.
  - Some confusion between dietary targets and nutrition.
- b) The following lunch was eaten by a pregnant female. Explain how this lunch meets some of the Scottish dietary target 2**
- Candidates need to learn the dietary targets (including figures) See Appendix A of the marking instructions.
  - Eat more fruit and vegetables or eat six slices of bread is not acceptable at Higher level.
- c) Pregnant women are advised to avoid certain types of foods during pregnancy. Identify two foods and discuss why they should be avoided. 3**
- Well answered.
- d) Identify and explain four factors which could affect the choice of clothing for a baby. 6**
- Well answered.
- e) Evaluate the role of the Food Standards Agency in protecting the interests of the consumers. 3**
- Statements made rather than evaluative comments linked to protection of the interests of the consumers.
  - Some confusion between the role of the FSA and EHD.

### Question 3

- a) Evaluate the benefits to health of the following cooking methods.**
- i) microwave cooking 2**
- ii) stir frying. 2**
- Statements about benefits of each method of cooking but not evaluated.
  - Nutrients retained not specified.
  - Candidates mainly associated with microwave foods/meals and failed to recognise that they could be used for cooking food.
- b) Identify and explain four lifestyle factors, other than those relating to diet, which would promote good health in adult life. 6**
- Good understanding of the lifestyle factors that can impact on our long term health.
  - Lifestyle seemed to confuse some candidates.
- c) An out of school club is planning to purchase a new team football strip. Identify and explain two factors that they would have to consider. 3**
- Generally well answered
- d) On delivery a number of football strips are found to be of the wrong colour and damaged. i) Identify the Act (including the date) which offers protection to the purchaser in this situation 1**
- Good identification of the correct act however the date of act was occasionally wrong meaning that the mark

was not earned.

- Candidates must learn correct names and dates associated with these acts.
- ii) Evaluate the protection offered to the purchaser by this Act. 3**
- Points of act were not evaluated in terms of the problems associated with the football strip.
- e) Electronic Funds Transfer at Point of Sale (EFTPoS) is a popular method of paying for goods Explain this as a method of payment. 3**
- Some understanding demonstrated by most of the candidates.
  - Some confusion with the use of credit cards.

#### **Question 4**

Least popular question.

- a) Evaluate the contribution breakfast cereals make in meeting the current dietary targets. 5**
- Candidates did not seem to recognise the broad range of dietary targets that breakfast cereals could contribute to.
  - This area may have been rushed by candidates as answers were too vague and general.
  - Evaluations could have been improved by referring to actual cereals/ cereals products and then providing details of the targets.
- b) Identify and discuss four ways a manufacturer may promote a new breakfast cereal. 6**
- Reasonably well answered.
- c) Explain the role of the Advertising Standards Authority in offering protection and support to the consumer. 2**
- Limited understanding demonstrated of the ASA.
- d) Manufacturers provide a range of information on packaging. Explain the usefulness to the consumer of each point of information identified on the product sleeve 4**
- Question not well answered.
  - Some candidates just named the symbol.
  - Limited understanding of the usefulness of the information provided.
  - Poor understanding in particular of bar code and recycle symbol.
- e) Evaluate the use of irradiation in food processing. 3**
- Poor understanding of the use of irradiation.
  - Very few marks gained.

## **Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well**

### **Technological project**

Step 1.1.

### **Written paper**

Nutrition evaluation question

## **Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty**

### **Technological project**

Measuring

Carrying out investigations

Drawing conclusions

Solution

Testing proposed solutions

Reviewing

Candidates using old proforma and being disadvantaged by the additional work previously required.

### **Written paper**

Knowledge of consumer organisations and acts.

## **Recommendations**

### **Feedback to centres**

#### **Technological project**

- Download the exemplar technological projects and use as a method of teaching the candidates what is required at each stage. Some centres choose to carry out a sample or previous technological project as a group exercise in the summer term.
- Teachers should be using the up-to-date teacher's guide which is issued each year to centres.
- Candidates should have their own copy of the candidates' guide and use it methodically through each step of the project.
- Develop the correct investigative skills in candidates throughout home economics course so they are familiar with requirements for investigative approach at Higher.
- Teachers must make sure that their candidates are using the exact wording to their technological projects. Wrong wording penalises the candidates.

#### **Written papers**

##### **Marking**

- Centres are encouraged to get teachers involved in marking on some aspect of the course they are delivering. In the Higher teachers could be involved in either the marking of the technological project or the written papers.