

## Principal Assessor Report 2003

**Assessment Panel:**

Home Economics

**Qualification area:**

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

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology — Higher

## Statistical information: update

<b>Number of entries in 2002</b>	124
<b>Pre appeal</b>	

<b>Number of entries in 2003</b>	155
<b>Pre appeal</b>	

### General comments re entry numbers

In the session 2002-03 current centres who presented at Higher level:

Health and Food Technology: 130 centres

Fashion and Textile Technology: 12 centres

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology: 30 centres

Of the above, the number of centres offering two contexts were:

Lifestyle & Consumer Technology *plus* Health and Food Technology: 8 centres

Fashion & Textile Technology *plus* Health and Food Technology: 8 centres

Therefore there are 16 centres presenting in two contexts.

Only **one** centre offered Home Economics in all three contexts.

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

Grade	Minimum mark
C	75
B	90
A	105

### 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 pre-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

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

Question papers and their associated marking schemes are designed to be 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 a grade A. The lowest mark for a grade B is set by the computer software as half way between a C and A grade boundaries.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

#### **Lifestyle and Consumer Technology Higher Technological Project 2003**

##### **General Comments**

The changes to the format of the Technological Project seem to have been beneficial with the candidates now being allocated marks for their work at the start of the Technological Projects. A number of centres still used the old project pro forma and are reminded that they should use the most up to date version which can be downloaded from the SQA website [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk).

Wording of Technological Project briefs seemed to be clear. The slightly more popular brief selected by the candidates was about the one that focused on the tourist attraction although there was a number of candidates who chose to carry out the Technological Project on the health promotion event.

The general standard of scripts is improving with candidates work benefiting from support that has been made available by SQA.

A large number of the submissions are now word processed however there is no need to word-process Technological Projects and no marks are awarded for presentation. However when candidates use the PC to word process their projects they are reminded that there is a spell check/grammar check facility that can make their submission easier to understand. The highest proportion of time should be spent on the content and the process and not word processing.

##### **Technological Project**

##### **Step 1.1 Identification of key points with explanation**

Wording of Technological Project briefs seem to be clear with most of the candidates managing to identify the key points. This section was carried out well. Good marks gained. A few centres had not appreciated that marks were allocated for additional detail and for additional key points and therefore lost marks by not identifying additional key points. It should be noted that this section requires the explanation of key points in terms of the wording of the brief but some centres were identifying straight dictionary definitions and therefore did not earn the marks.

##### **Step 1.2 Draw up appropriate criteria for a specification**

Well done other than last section on measuring. Candidates do not seem to understand 'measuring' and they list how each specification point can be investigated. The method of measuring is the way that the candidates can check whether they have met the specification point once their product has been developed.

##### **Step 1.3 Devise an overall plan for investigation**

Lack of depth in each investigation was common although this did not always affect the final marks. However it made it more difficult to follow and this affected the candidates understanding. Order was sometimes not logical or appropriate. Candidates should check that they have identified investigations which take account of all areas of the specification.

Investigations - techniques sometimes not quantified with target group and therefore marks were lost. Justification should take be linked to either the data collected or the technique used for the investigation.

Still some evidence that final solution has already been decided by the candidate and that investigations have been engineered to achieve the solution.

## **Step 2**

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

The area of investigations is still causing some problems although it is clear that candidates are more familiar with the requirement to collect data to allow the formulation of a solution. Now that candidates only carry out three investigations this area is more concise. However a number of centres are still allowing their candidates to carry out four investigations, which does disadvantage the candidates.

Where the plan for investigations was wordy, candidates lost marks because they failed to complete all areas planned.

#### **Aim**

On occasion the aims were not carried out fully or the investigations planned changed by the time they were carried out and this made the candidates lose a number of marks. There is evidence of pupils using information gained from one investigation and using it to narrow down the area for the following investigations making it easier to arrive at the proposed solution.

#### **Brief**

Some investigations were too brief and showed little depth of data. On occasions just results were provided. Some investigations were shallow ie four questions in a questionnaire.

Candidates clearly spend a lot of time generating computer generated pie charts/star diagrams etc however if they fail to provide labels to explain the data they will lose marks. A good way to display results is in a chart, providing headings are used.

#### **Facts/Results**

Occasionally blank questionnaires were provided with no record of results therefore the findings are not clear. Candidates should be reminded that there should be a minimum number of 20 questionnaires issued to ensure validity. If an expert is interviewed their title/area of expertise should be stated. Results for each area of sensory testing should be provided when using sensory evaluation, which adds to the validity.

#### **Conclusions**

Very often general statements/summary of results made which are not based on evidence provided in the investigation. Candidates show a limited ability to draw conclusions. This is an area that needs to be addressed.

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

Most candidates correctly identified and then described in detail their solution, which showed some evidence of links to their results and conclusions from the investigations.

## **Step 3**

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

#### **Planned sequence of work**

- ◆ Candidates need to take care that they follow the guidance provided and provide dates and times as instructed in the Candidates Guide. As period times vary between different centres actual times are required.
- ◆ Evidence of some candidates writing their plans retrospectively.
- ◆ Plans lacked depth of detail and demonstrated little effective deployment of time. therefore it would be difficult to manufacture the item successfully.
- ◆ Little evidence of hygiene — washing vegetables, in planning

**Identify and requisition all the resources and equipment required to manufacture the solution.**

Requisitioning was poor — food was ordered but often quantities of ingredients were omitted. Metric measurements are required but often imperial or American measurements were identified. Not all equipment identified/required was requisitioned. When fabric was ordered there was sometimes no information such as type, length, width, and colour. Sizes of zips/types of trimmings etc should be stated. If an actual paper pattern is used the number should be identified. Types of scissors used should be identified. Some photographed ingredients did not match with the requisitioned list.

Justification was effective although repetitive.

**Step 3.2 Devise two tests for the manufactured solution**

Generally planning for tests was acceptable. The most successful tests focused on the specification and took account of the methods of measuring identified in Step 1.2. Techniques identified were generally correct and made reference made in most cases to the target group. Justification tended to show an understanding of the reason for testing and the value of the information gained.

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

Testing can cause problems. This was an area of weakness.

Many of the points that were identified in the Step 2.1 also apply to this area. Often sensory testing provided for one of the two tests but there was little indication of how the results were arrived at. Table of results provided but no key to explain results and therefore the work fails to gain marks.

Interviews provided the most valuable information when both questions and answers were provided. When candidates identified questions, which drew on the specification, detailed information was gained that could then be drawn on in the next section (evaluation).

When nutritional analysis is used as a test it should be completed by an interview with a dietician/food technologist or a home economics teacher to confirm/evaluate the results in terms of the chosen brief.

Conclusions were again poor for the following reasons

- ◆ a list of results or statements being given
- ◆ inaccurate results
- ◆ no evidence to back them up results
- ◆ no identification of appropriate expert.
- ◆ no recognition of strengths and weakness of manufacture solution.

Sound tests will provide more valuable data that can help formulate the next section.

**Step 4****Step 4.1 Evaluate the chosen solution**

Although there is evidence that some candidates are improving their evaluation skills there are still some candidates providing statements rather than evaluation. Very often the results from the tests were ignored when writing up the evaluation and therefore claims were not supported by evidence in the tests. Candidates should take care to ensure that they make evaluative comments about each specification point. At least one of the specification points should be evaluated in detail to ensure that full marks for this section are obtained. Comments were often subjective or personal and were not backed up by evidence. When evaluating 'cost effective' the candidate should provide evidence of costing to verify their evaluative comments.

### Step 4.2 Review the Technological Project

Although the candidates use the words ‘time, skills and abilities, and resources’ time was the most frequent heading used for the review however it often was not qualified by evidence in the Technological Project. Some pupils used exemplar materials as a guide but what they wrote was not linked to evidence in their own Technological Project.

### General observations on the Technological Project

The most successful candidates in the Technological Project could understand the concept of measuring, carried out both sound investigations and tests and also provided evaluations, which made reference to the results of tests.

Many candidates carried out one of the investigations ‘to find out by research the Dietary Targets for 2005’ as this is an essential piece of knowledge for both standard grade and higher this should be considered as prior knowledge. Given that investigations are now limited to three this limits the range of investigations that can be carried out.

### Feedback on Lifestyle and Consumer Technology Higher Paper Section A

- |    |  |          |
|----|--|----------|
| 1  | <b>State two factors which contribute to diverticulitis.</b>   | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ Well answered  |          |
| 2  | <b>Give two examples of information found on an energy rating label.</b>                               | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ A number of candidates confused the energy rating label with energy values found on food labelling   |          |
| 3  | <b>List two ways in which a retail outlet could market a new food product.</b>                         | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ Well answered  |          |
| 4  | <b>List two factors which could affect the choice of clothing for the elderly.</b>                     | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ Well answered  |          |
| 5  | <b>What does the abbreviation APR stand for?</b>   | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ Well answered  |          |
| 6  | <b>Give one function of the Women’s Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS).</b>                                | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ Some candidates had no knowledge of this group   |          |
| 7  | <b>Explain the purpose of the European ‘CE’ standard label.</b>  | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ Confused   |          |
|    | ♦ Lack of understanding  |          |
| 8  | <b>Give one reason for the use of elastomeric fibres in leisure wear.</b>                              | <b>1</b> |
|    | ♦ Well answered  |          |
| 9  | <b>Explain two terms of the Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994.</b>                                     | <b>2</b> |
|    | ♦ Well answered  |          |
| 10 | <b>Describe two practical ways of avoiding hypertension.</b>   | <b>2</b> |
|    | ♦ Well answered  |          |
| 11 | <b>Explain two ways in which locale affects the purchase of goods and services.</b>                    | <b>2</b> |
|    | ♦ Some candidates did not understand the word ‘locale’ however it is used in the course content grids. |          |

12. **Give two benefits to the consumer of advertising.** 2  
 ♦ Well answered
13. **Identify one advantage and one disadvantage of direct debit as a method of payment.** 2  
 ♦ Poorly answered  
 ♦ Number of candidates confused direct debit and credit
- 14 **Explain two functions of the Department of Environment, Fisheries and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)** 2  
 ♦ Few candidates were aware of the functions of this organisation.

## Section B

### Question 1

- a) **Explain two functions of ‘the family’.** 2  
 ♦ Good understanding demonstrated of the functions of the family
- b) **Identify and discuss four factors which may have brought about recent changes in family lifestyle.** 6  
 ♦ Good understanding shown  
 ♦ Candidates who used a good lay out for their answers scored well by making sure they had clear factors and then explanations.
- c) **Explain how food choice can be influenced by a family’s economic circumstances.** 4  
 ♦ Candidates found it difficult to get four different answers
- d) **Evaluate the usefulness to ‘the family’ of each of the following technological developments.**
- i **breathable membranes**
- ii **genetic modification** 4
- ♦ Points not always evaluative  
 ♦ Some candidates demonstrated some knowledge of each area but failed to make their answers evaluative.
- e) **Evaluate the support Social Services can give a family on a low income.** 4  
 ♦ Answers sometimes provide statement of fact and not always made evaluative comments  
 ♦ An area of weakness as candidates took this question to mean ‘social security’ not social services.
- 2 **The table below shows the nutrient content of meals eaten by a 14 year old boy.**
- a) **Using your knowledge of nutrition and the information provided, evaluate the suitability of this intake.** 5  
 ♦ More poorly answered than by the candidates in HFT context.  
 ♦ Answers lifted from table and not evaluated.  
 ♦ Answers not linked to the needs of the 14 year old boy.  
 ♦ Poor knowledge of nutrition demonstrated.

b)	<b>Prepare a set of five guidelines to encourage a teenager to follow a healthy lifestyle.</b>	5
	◆ Well answered	
c)	<b>Identify and explain four ways in which television is used to influence teenagers choice of goods and services.</b>	6
	◆ Poorly laid out answers	
	◆ Answers not linked to choices relevant to teenagers	
d)	<b>Evaluate the contribution which the school meals service makes in assistant primary school children to meet the current dietary targets.</b>	4
	◆ Poorly answered	
	◆ Answers not linked to primary schools	
	◆ Confusion with dietary targets	
	◆ Points made rather than evaluative comments	
3 a)	<b>Identify four dietary targets and explain how each can be implemented to reduce the incidence of obesity.</b>	6
	◆ Some candidates did not appear to understand the word implemented.	
	◆ Some candidates did not know the dietary targets and wrongly referred to ‘eat more NSP’, ‘eat five portions of fruit and vegetables per day’ etc.	
b)	<b>Identify and explain four technological developments in white goods.</b>	6
	◆ Lack of up to date information on technological developments	
	◆ Most answers given were long established developments eg fridge freezers, cooker timers etc	
c)	<b>Evaluate the use of credit cards as a method of payment for white goods.</b>	4
	◆ Answers not always linked to payment for white goods.	
	◆ Not all candidates evaluated.	
d)	<b>Internet shopping has become more popular. Evaluate this as a method of purchasing goods.</b>	4
	◆ Good understanding of Internet shopping	
	◆ Answers not always evaluative	
4 a)	<b>Identify and explain the main factors that affect the choice of clothing for pre school children.</b>	6
	◆ Answers had to be linked to the pre school child.	
	◆ Some candidates answered this area very well by clearly identifying the factor and then providing an explanation linked to the needs of the pre school child.	
b)	<b>A textile manufacturer plans to develop a new range of clothing targeted at preschool nursery children. Identify and explain four stages in the development and marketing of this range.</b>	6
	◆ Candidates who knew the product development strategy scored well	
	◆ Answers had to show knowledge of this range of clothing in their answers.	
c)	<b>Evaluate the support offered to the consumer by the Citizens Advice Bureau</b>	4
	◆ Answers not always evaluative or linked to the needs of a consumer	
	◆ Some confusion with other consumer organisations.	
	◆ Poor area of knowledge	

d) **Evaluate the information provided by textile labelling.**

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- ◆ Answers not always evaluative
- ◆ Some candidates found it difficult to provide four points

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

**Technological Project**

Step 1

Step 3.1 and 3.2

**Written Paper**

**Knowledge**

Functions of the family

Factors to promote a healthy lifestyle

Internet shopping

Factors affecting choice of clothing for pre school children and elderly.

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

**Technological Project**

- ◆ Measuring
- ◆ Investigations
- ◆ Testing
- ◆ Evaluating

**Written Paper**

**Knowledge**

- ◆ Direct debit
- ◆ WRVS
- ◆ European CE label
- ◆ DEFRA
- ◆ Social services
- ◆ Nutrition
- ◆ Dietary targets
- ◆ Up to date technological developments of white goods
- ◆ Product development strategy
- ◆ Consumer Organisations

**Evaluation**

- ◆ Evaluation skills of many candidates still need to be improved. They often have the knowledge but cannot turn this into an evaluation.
- ◆ Evaluation skills deteriorate towards the end of the written paper when the candidates are tired or run out of time.

## Recommendations

### Feedback to centres

#### General comments

- ◆ Candidates choose a mixture of the three remaining questions although Question 2 and 3 were more popular than question 4.
- ◆ Teachers should be encouraged by the progress that has been seen this session and should continue to develop this good practice.
- ◆ Evaluation skills were better at the start of the examination than at the end of the examination when some candidates tended to revert to facts.
- ◆ Teachers should ensure that candidates practice evaluation type questions under examination conditions.
- ◆ There is good evidence that a number of candidates have been trained how to layout their answers to ensure that they obtain the highest possible marks.

#### Technological Project

- ◆ Centres must make sure they are using the up to date pro forma for their submission.
- ◆ Ensure candidates know the difference between measuring and investigating.
- ◆ Investigations require to be carried out exactly a planned, show scientific validity and have sound conclusions drawn that are based on evidence.
- ◆ Testing needs to be implemented following the same guidance as the investigations.

#### Written paper

- ◆ Candidates should continue to practice evaluation style answers using the Evaluation Skills pack which was first issued in March 2002 and the various updates.
- ◆ Practice Section A style questions
- ◆ Practice Section B Question 1 areas of course content.
- ◆ Candidates have been prepared this session in lay out of answers and depth of knowledge although there are still some gaps in knowledge.

#### Composition of Written paper

Mark allocation for paper is

Resource Management	25 marks (+/-)5 marks
Consumer Studies	55 marks (+/-)5 marks

The balance of skills assessed is

Select and apply knowledge	50 – 55 marks
Make critical appraisals and reasoned decisions	25 – 30 marks

In Section B Question 1 is taken from the Consumer Studies Unit

Area to be assessed are:

- ◆ Socio-economic factors affecting lifestyle and consumer choice of goods and services
- ◆ The implications of changes in social trends on individuals and families
- ◆ Changing circumstances in lifestyle

- ◆ This should be taken into account when preparing candidates for the examination to ensure that they spend sufficient time on the Consumer Studies Unit.

Teachers should continue to maintain improvement in:

- ◆ Evaluation skills
- ◆ Using the issued marking schemes to train candidates in correct answering technique.