

## Principal Assessor Report 2005

**Assessment Panel:**

**Home Economics/Hospitality**

**Qualification area**

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

**Advanced Higher  
Fashion and Textile Technology  
Health and Food Technology  
Lifestyle and Consumer Technology**

## Statistical information: update

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2004</b>	<b>Fashion and Textile Technology: 0</b> <b>Health and Food Technology : 15</b> <b>Lifestyle and Consumer Technology: 2</b>
---	---

<b>Number of resulted entries in 2005</b>	<b>Fashion and Textile Technology: 2</b> <b>Health and Food Technology: 32</b> <b>Lifestyle and Consumer Technology: 5</b>
---	--

## General comments re resulted entry numbers

### **Fashion and Textile Technology**

Two centres, both having presented before, each presented one candidate.

### **Health and Food Technology**

13 centres presented 32 candidates. A total of nine new centres presented 18 candidates. A considerable rise in the number of candidates presented.

### **Lifestyle and Consumer Technology**

Two centres, both having presented before, presented 5 candidates.

## Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

### Distribution of awards including grade boundaries

#### Fashion and Textile Technology

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark- <b>200</b>	-	-	-	-
A	0.0	0.0	0	140
B	0.0	0.0	0	120
C	50.0	50.0	1	100
D	0.0	50.0	0	90
No award	50.0	100.0	1	-

#### Health and Food Technology

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark- <b>200</b>	-	-	-	-
A	6.3	6.3	2	140
B	28.1	34.4	9	120
C	31.3	65.6	10	100
D	9.4	75.0	3	90
No award	25.0	100.0	8	-

#### Lifestyle and Consumer Technology

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark- <b>200</b>	-	-	-	-
A	0.0	0.0	0	140
B	40.0	40.0	2	120
C	40.0	80.0	2	100
D	20.0	100.0	1	90
No award	0.0	100.0	0	-

## 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 any significant changes in distribution of awards/grade boundaries

Grade boundaries have been set in line with “a priori” boundaries in all three contexts.

### Health and Food Technology

In Health and Food Technology there was a significant improvement in candidates achieving B and C awards. Overall out of 32 candidates, at pre appeal stage, 21 candidates were successful.

A award – 2 candidates

B award – 9 candidates

C award – 10 candidates

No award – 11 candidates

Mean mark for the Dissertation was 49.1 as compared to 56.1 in 2004

Mean mark for the Question Paper was 56.8 as compared to 51.1 in 2004

### Lifestyle and Consumer Technology

Awards were fairly similar to previous years

B award – 2 candidates

C award – 2 candidates

No award – 1 candidate

Mean mark for the Dissertation was 56.2 as compared to 54.0 in 2004

Mean mark for the Question Paper was 58.6 as compared to 54.0 in 2004

### Fashion and Textile Technology

Awards were fairly similar to previous years.

C award – 1 candidate

No award – 1 candidate

Mean mark for the Dissertation was 50.5. There were no candidates in 2004  
Mean mark for the Question Paper was 47.5.

## Comments on candidate performance

### General comments

#### Dissertation – all contexts

Some satisfactory results where centres have followed the guidelines but generally dissertations were disappointing as compared to previous years.

Candidates generally appeared to be making considerable efforts with the dissertation but results were sometimes disappointing due to lack of depth and the use of poor reference sources. In many cases reference sources lacked credibility – candidates were too reliant on websites and tabloid newspapers.

There was evidence of better wording of the topic for the dissertation but sometimes objectives did not link with the topic.

#### Question paper

The better candidates showed improvement in critical discussion/analysis and included both positive and negative discussion.

HFT – The compulsory questions – Section A and Section B Question 1 – were well answered by candidates.

The candidates own choice of question was less well answered.

Overall the marks for the question paper in this context had improved but some new centres need to ensure that their candidates are giving an appropriate level of depth within the responses. Those candidates achieving good marks showed sound understanding and demonstrated depth in their responses.

LCT – The majority of candidates performed well and had been thoroughly trained for the examination.

FTT – One candidate displayed a very good level of knowledge whilst the other candidate had difficulty achieving the required depth.

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

#### Dissertation – all contexts

The standard of English was good in the majority of candidates' work.

Within the methodology section there was more evidence of piloting of questionnaires.

Dissertations were well presented with good use of IT for results section.

#### Question Paper

In all three contexts, candidates did not appear to have any difficulty with the wording of the questions.

#### Health and Food Technology Question Paper

##### Section A

All sections were generally well answered with candidates achieving very good marks.

Candidates were able to specify the main issues from the report, discuss the range of promotional techniques used by manufacturers and provided critical discussion - in good depth – about other factors which may influence food choice.

##### Section B

Question 1 (b) The majority of candidates gave detailed, well explained answers which demonstrated a good knowledge of dietary targets in relation to health. Specific targets should be stated by candidates - only in one

centre did candidates produce inaccurate dietary targets.

Question 4 One candidate gave an excellent response. This covered all stages of the food chain and showed an excellent understanding of steps taken through out the food chain along with the legislation associated with each stage.

### **Lifestyle and Consumer Technology Question Paper**

#### **Section A**

All sections were generally well answered with candidates achieving good marks.

(b) Candidates tended to focus too much on women working rather than looking at the wider changes in the role of women.

(c) Not a wide range of implications discussed – candidates tended to focus on the negative aspects rather than positive ones.

#### **Section B**

Question 1 (a) Generally well answered although candidates tended not to use the information relating to the average weekly household income in their responses.

(b) Reasonably well answered with candidates showing a good understanding of the needs of an elderly person.

### **Fashion and Textile Technology Question Paper**

Section A was very well answered by one candidate.

In Section B question 2 was well answered with the candidate showing a thorough knowledge of CAD/CAM.

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

#### **Dissertation – all contexts**

**Some centres did not follow the format identified in the guidance documents. This had an adverse effect on the candidates' results.**

Although references are being cited within the text, details of citations and reference sources need improving. In some centres, reference sources were weak – too much use of the internet and insufficient use of up to date journals / texts.

Some candidates had no objectives.

Methodology section, although some improvement was seen, requires more detail and justification for the approaches taken eg approach used should be justified, sampling should be explained and justified, reasons for open ended questions should be given.

The use of interviews as a primary research approach was misunderstood by some candidates. An interview may not sometimes be suitable as a primary research method – where an individual gives only background information, the information from the interview may be more suited to being used as secondary research in the introduction.

Very little use of references in methodology and conclusion.

Discussion of results should be in the conclusion – some candidates tended to discuss in the results section rather than just identify key findings.

Conclusions were not always accurate, were not based on evidence and results were often repeated but without analysis and discussion.

## **Question Paper**

### **Health and Food Technology Question Paper**

#### **Section B**

Question 1(a) – Disappointing answers from candidates with many achieving half marks or less. Candidates did not differentiate between oily and white fish when referring to nutritional value.

Question 2 – Candidates did discuss the issues concerning organic foods but discussion was not in detail nor wide ranging. Some candidates were confused between GM and organic foods.

Question 4 – The majority of candidates showed limited awareness of all the stages in the food chain and lacked specifics. Responses were very general and in some cases were not relevant to the food chain.

Question 5 – Generally not well answered. Candidates gave limited responses. Some referred generally to additives and a poor knowledge of the subject area was demonstrated – lack of clear focus on the colour, flavour and nutritional use of additives in food products.

### **Lifestyle and Consumer Technology Question Paper**

#### **Section B**

Question 3 This was answered by all candidates but discussion was not wide ranging nor in detail. Candidates tended to focus mainly on television and packaging.

### **Fashion and Textile Technology Question Paper**

#### **Section A**

(b) one candidate identified only 1 relevant fashioner designer within the last 20 years.

#### **Section B**

Question 1 (a) and (b) One candidate experienced difficulty discussing core costs and quality in any detail.  
(b) Answers were very limited.

Question 3 only a very limited knowledge was displayed about chemical finishes by one candidate – answer was very brief.

## Recommendations

### Feedback to centres

#### **Dissertation – all 3 contexts**

##### **General points**

##### **The following guidance documents**

- **Guidance notes for Candidates / Teachers and Lecturers**
- **Dissertation Specification**
- **Dissertation Grade Descriptors**

**must be used to ensure the structure of the dissertation is correctly followed.**

**Candidates will be penalised if the structure outlined in the Candidates guide is not followed**

References should be credible and correctly cited throughout all stages of the dissertation.

Internet sources may be American or Australian and so may not provide information / data relevant to the dissertation.

Centres should avoid the use of personal pronouns within the dissertation.

##### **Introduction**

- Evidence of wide reading should be present – using credible sources.
- Justification should be used for the choice of objectives.

##### **Methodology**

- Centres must encourage candidates to present a detailed, in depth piece of research rather than two or three investigation type approaches. Where candidates try to carry out two or three investigations, the results lack the depth required at Advanced Higher level.
- One well constructed questionnaire could be sufficient to prove / disprove the three objectives
- Research should focus on the objectives and be logical in progression.
- Questionnaires should be well constructed and contain relevant questions to help prove / disprove the objectives.

##### **Results**

- The use of a colour printer aids the interpretation of results.
- Candidates should use the same scaling for tables of results.
- Results should have the key findings identified under them.
- Any discussion of results should be in the conclusion.

##### **Conclusion**

- Conclusions should provide a discussion of the main findings of the research. The discussions should be accurate and be based on evidence found within the dissertation.
- Each objective should be discussed in the conclusion.
- All results should be discussed and analysed.

#### **Question Paper – all contexts**

Still some evidence that some candidates are writing too many responses for Section A (a)

Centres should use the SQA Understanding Standards – Advanced Higher website to increase awareness of the Marking Principles used for marking the Question Paper and candidate examples of responses. This may give some direction as to the level of depth required in candidates' responses.

Centres should encourage candidates to further research knowledge identified in the course content/ elaboration of all three contexts in order to keep up with changing developments.