



External Assessment Report 2015

Subject(s)	Health and Food Technology
Level(s)	Higher

The statistics used in this report are pre-appeal.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers/lecturers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published question papers and marking instructions for the Examination.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

The number of candidates presented for Health and Food Technology has decreased this year due to the introduction of the new Higher.

Most candidates embark on the Higher Health and Food Technology course having studied Standard Grade Home Economics, National 5 or Intermediate 2 Health and Food Technology. However, almost 50% are direct entries with no previous record.

81% of candidates achieved grades A–C in the examination, but almost 20% of the candidates were awarded a Band D or no award. By examining the breakdown of the component marks it is possible to establish the areas that should be addressed to ensure that future candidates pass the examination.

The average mark for the Technological Project slightly decreased from last year, and the average mark for the exam paper increased.

Technological Project

Step

- 1.1 The vast majority of candidates ensured that the brief was correctly copied from the wording on the SQA website. Most candidates provided good explanations of the key wording of the brief. Those candidates who showed better understanding in the explanations of the key points tended to demonstrate better understanding of the brief, which benefitted them at later stages of the technological project.

Candidates who grouped key points together rather than separately lost marks for not giving an explanation of each key point. Candidates who provided dictionary definitions rather than explanations lost marks. Some very brief explanations were given.

- 1.2 Specification points were linked well to the key points by most candidates. The candidates who developed specification points that clearly linked to the core key points from the wording of the brief tended to produce better solutions in step 2.2 as their work was more focused. Generally, the candidates produced between five and six specifications points, and only a few produced seven or more. This avoided additional work at later stages.

The key points are not being carried forward by some candidates, and this carried on into step 1.3 investigations. Those candidates who gave double specification points were disadvantaged in a number of areas as they could not fully explain or evaluate the whole (both parts) specification point.

Most candidates explained in detail the importance of each specification point and showed knowledge in their explanations.

A few candidates did not number their specification points.

Some candidates are using previous Marking Instructions to identify techniques for measuring. This can result in the measurement/explanation not being linked to the candidate's specification point so losing marks. A few failed to earn marks as they did not use the correct terminology (eg 'ask', 'get feedback') or they identified inappropriate experts — candidates should make reference to the Candidate Guide.

Many candidates were using the teacher as the **only expert** for the investigations.

- 2.1 Centres which made good use of the guidance provided in the candidate guide provided strong investigations which provided valuable data to use when drawing up a solution.

Generally the resources were clearly identified, but on occasion some candidates omitted the name or position of the expert who was used for the research.

A few candidates put too much information on p8, which was not subsequently investigated.

Some candidates provided minimal investigations which did not allow sufficient data to be collected to allow the creation of interesting solutions that related to their specifications. Some candidates are not displaying all results for the investigations and are only asking four questions in an interview.

Costing continues to be poorly carried out as valid sources are not given.

Literary / internet search requires three different sources for a valid investigation.

- 2.2 Some candidates came up with original solutions based on good research from the data collected in their investigations. The solutions were clearly linked to wording of the brief and described in detail with exact ingredients and step by step method.

Some candidates produced very simple solutions or failed to develop new food products. This fails to meet the wording of the brief to 'develop' a new dish or food product. Candidates should use metric measurements and not write ½ onion, 1 carrot etc.

- 3.1 Most candidates provided sufficient detail about how to manufacture their chosen solution which could allow it to be produced exactly by another person.

Good justifications showed an understanding of the functional properties of the ingredients, nutritional contribution or aesthetic appeal.

Justifications such as adds colour or flavour repeatedly is vague and repetitive.

Candidates are reminded they should include the date. Some candidates failed to provide sufficient detail to allow the preparation of the solution Time – some tasks taking too long.

Hygiene - Some candidates failed to include hygiene throughout the preparation of the solution – hand washing after preparing raw chicken and washing of fruit and vegetables.

Equipment was often missing and type of knife not stated.

Some justifications are very repetitive losing candidates mark.

- 3.2 When candidates prepared tests that covered all of the specifications points, this provided good data for evaluation against the spec in 4.1.

Questions or tests did not focus on the specification points which did not allow an evaluation in the next stage to be based on evidence.

- 3.3 Candidates who made good use of the guidance provided in the Candidate Guide provided strong valid testing which provided valuable data to use in the evaluation section particularly step 4.1.

Some candidates failed to identify the expert they were interviewing.

In some cases the testing failed to assess whether the solution met all the specification points and few candidates asked for comments on improving or modifying the solution which would provide information for the evaluation.

- 4.1 Candidates who conducted testing against each of the specification points gave themselves data on which to base their evaluations. If the candidates provided the opinion, linked to the fact which can be seen within the content of the technological project, and then recognised the consequence in terms of the proposed solution, they earned the marks (OFC).

Some candidates are able to evaluate using OFC but are inaccurate in the factual information they are providing or make the consequence a repeat of the opinion (I have met this specification point as...fact and so I have met the specification point) Evaluation often included personal opinions and inaccurate interpretation of results. There was not always evidence of costing.

- 4.2 Candidates showed some improvement in the technique in this area and were making reference to time, resources and skills.

Candidates who made obvious links to time, resources and skills and abilities which could be backed up by evidence in the technological project and then linked the consequence for the final solution earned the marks.

Some candidates gave unsupported, personal comments/statements in their attempt to complete the evaluation. Candidates wrote about previous experience in

courses. This is not evidence that can be used as the basis of the evaluations.

The candidates are not always linking the evaluative comments to the consequence for the final solution and so are failing to include a valid consequence in the evaluative comment.

This area of the project is still found to be the most difficult for the candidates although there is some improvement.

Performance in written paper

These comments should be read in conjunction with the examination paper and the marking instructions which will be available on the SQA website. The comments include areas where candidates performed well and areas they found demanding and so helps provide guidance on improving candidate performance.

Section A

Question

- 1 Most stated vitamin B without group or complex.
- 2 Well answered.
- 3 Majority got marks.
- 4 Majority got marks.
- 5 Well done.
- 6 Majority answered well.
- 7 Lack of understanding.
- 8 Poorly answered.
- 9 Well answered.
- 10 Fairly well answered.
- 11 Most candidates gained 2 marks.
- 12 Reasonably well answered.
- 13 Fairly well answered.
- 14 Some candidates responses had vague knowledge of extruded foods.

Section B Question 1 (compulsory question)

- 1a The majority of the candidates used OFC in their answers and correctly referred to the pregnant woman in each response.

Candidates must provide all stages of the answer – an opinion based on the data on the table linked to the person in the wording of the question. They must then demonstrate their knowledge of the function of the nutrient and then provide a consequence in relation to the impact on health of the person.

- 1b Candidates had good knowledge of the effect of heat on these nutrients.
- 1c This was answered fairly well, but a number evaluated pasta linked to NSP but did not state wholemeal pasta so did not gain the mark.
- This question can be repeated for other foods.
- 1d Candidates demonstrated knowledge of factors contributing to osteoporosis.
- Some candidates gave non-dietary factors linked to calcium.
- Lack of knowledge for explanations from some candidates.
- This question can be repeated for other dietary diseases.

Choice Questions: Question 2

- 2a Well answered by the majority of the candidates who selected this question.
- A few candidates lacked knowledge of the product development strategy.
- A few candidates failed to refer to the pizza in each response and so lost marks.
- Explanations given by the candidates for each stage have improved. Some stages are still being incorrectly identified, and there is confusion with concept generation and concept screening, product testing and prototype production.
- 2b All attributes of the product were well answered, with many giving good evaluations that referred to and showed knowledge of the needs of teenagers.
- Candidates demonstrated some good evaluative technique in this question.
- Candidates should practise food focused products in the different styles of this question which appear frequently.
- Answers must refer to the product that is used in the question and show an understanding of the star profile rating linked to the number: 5 = very high, 4 = high 2= low and 1 = very low etc. Many candidates lost marks as they did not differentiate between the value of 4 and 5 or 2 and 1.
- 2c Increasing fruit and vegetables – statements which lack explanation.
- Reducing salt – answered well.
- 2d Poor evaluation technique for this question. Freezing was answered better than hydroponics.

- 2e EHD was answered better than TSD, and many candidates gave statements and not explanations for these departments.

Question 3

- 3a Good knowledge of mechanical methods of adding air to a food product. Explanations did not always link to the baked product.
- 3b Candidates demonstrated good nutritional knowledge but did not always link to the elderly.
- 3c Answers were not written as evaluations.
- 3d Lack of explanation of how the additives benefit the consumer.

Candidates should develop knowledge of additives and benefits to the consumer.
- 3e Candidates lacked specific knowledge of bacillus cereus. One control measure was given but not explained well.

Question 4

- 4a Well answered by the candidates. Many were able to identify factors other than diet linked to CHD.
- 4b Candidates had a lack of knowledge of environmental information on food labelling.
- 4c Candidates were able to identify why sensory testing is carried out but explanations were lacking.
- 4d Not well answered by many candidates as only one evaluation for sweeteners and fair trade foods was given by most.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2014	953
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Number of resulted entries in 2015	317
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark - 150				
A	28.7%	28.7%	91	105
B	31.2%	59.9%	99	90
C	21.1%	81.1%	67	75
D	8.5%	89.6%	27	67
No award	10.4%	-	33	-

The course assessment functioned as intended therefore no adjustment to grade boundaries was required.

General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). 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 management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ 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, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this 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.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.