

GCSE Examiners' Report

Food Preparation and Nutrition
GCSE
Summer 2025

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each component.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.¹

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	Eduqas offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page
Grade boundary information	<p>Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade.</p> <p>For unitted specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and component level.</p> <p>For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each component that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.</p>	<p>For unitted specifications click here:</p> <p>Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)</p>

¹ Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

Exam Results Analysis	Eduqas provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the Eduqas subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner Eduqas

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Executive Summary

Component 1 – Principles of Food and Nutrition External Assessment

The examination paper was of a very similar standard to previous examination series and outcomes generally aligned. Candidates generally displayed knowledge and understanding of a wide coverage of Component 1 content. However, there were some obvious gaps in knowledge and often candidates showed knowledge but were unable to demonstrate understanding of that knowledge. Section A will always allocate a range of marks linked to a specific focus but span a wide content range, some of these marks will be given for simple recall (knowledge) and some for understanding. Many candidates were unable to develop their responses beyond simple recall and either did not attempt to try to demonstrate understanding or made incorrect developments.

Section B will always have a range of question types, and this allows candidates to showcase their knowledge and understanding, across all areas of the content.

There was also evidence, throughout quite a few responses, of misconceptions and incorrect knowledge of key Food Preparation and Nutrition terms.

Many candidates are missing out on further marks by giving simplistic and brief responses to questions allocated more than 1 mark. Focussing on the command verb will be key to understand the requirement of the question, and the number of lines allocated for the response is also a prompt to show where extended writing is required.

In higher tariff questions in Section B, candidates need to develop their answers and if required, give a balanced response. Too many candidates miss out on achieving the higher bands for extended writing responses as they give superficial explanations and unsupported judgements. However, many candidates did very well on extended responses and demonstrated sound understanding of the requirements of specific command verbs. There has been an improvement for some candidates this year, which is pleasing to see.

Component 2 - Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action

Performance across both NEA components was broadly consistent with the previous year. Most centres guided candidates effectively, and many acted on moderator feedback from 2024. However, overmarking - particularly in NEA 2 Section B - remains an issue. Candidates showed improved primary research and planning, though analytical depth and scientific justification were still limited in some areas.

In NEA 1, candidates demonstrated strong research skills. However, photographic evidence and scientific analysis were often lacking. Section C was particularly challenging, with many candidates failing to link results to scientific principles or evaluate hypotheses effectively.

In NEA 2, there was a noticeable increase in primary research and practical trials. Orders of work were generally well-structured, with improved dovetailing and presentation planning. However, justification of dish choices lacked depth, and some candidates included non-creditworthy content such as recipes and costings.

Photographic evidence was often insufficient or included poorly annotated images which hindered moderation and limited candidates' ability to justify marks. Candidates often described practical outcomes without linking them to scientific principles, especially in Section C of NEA 1. In NEA 2, the use of colour-coded plans and visual prompts improved clarity, but some candidates still struggled with dovetailing and time management.

To improve in NEA 1, candidates should be encouraged to include concise, focused research that supports hypothesis development. Candidates also need to improve their scientific analysis and evaluation, particularly in Section C. Photographic evidence should be diverse, annotated, and embedded within the main body of the document. In NEA 2, candidates should be discouraged from including content such as recipes and costings as this is a waste of the candidates time and is also non-creditworthy.

Resources to Support Improvement:

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Component 1		
Exam practice and technique	Portal	Past paper and mark schemes
Examination Technique: command verbs, extended writing, application of knowledge	https://resources.edugas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceSingle.aspx?rlid=1476	Exam walk through
Granularity of subject content e.g. Micro-nutrients	Edugas Digital Educational Resources	Knowledge organisers
Subject content	Resource	Thinking tools
Subject content	Free education resources for teaching young people aged 3-16 years about where food comes from, cooking and healthy eating, and teacher training. - Food A Fact Of Life	Resources for teaching
Subject content	Resource	BBC class clips
Subject content	Edugas Digital Educational Resources	Effect of cooking on commodities
Command words	https://resource.download.wjec.co.uk/vtc/2016-17/16-17-3-18/eng/assessment-Objectives_wjec.pdf	All the possible command words used in the exam are explained in this document.
Component 2		
NEA 2	Portal	Exemplar materials
NEA 2	Resource	Illuminate video for practical skills
NEA 2	Resource	Food preparation skills videos
NEA 2	edugas-gcse-food-preparation-and-nutrition-upskilling-recipes.pptx	PowerPoint – upskilling recipes
NEA 2	edugas-gcse-food-prep-and-nutrition-work-smarter-with-nea.pptx	PowerPoint – work smarter not harder

NEA 2	GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition Eduqas	Open website – Star diagrams Mark sheets Viscosity charts Practical skills sheets Sensory vocabulary poster Specification Guidance for teaching
Complete a variety of sensory tests	Search Resources Only - Food A Fact Of Life GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition Eduqas eduqas-gcse-food-prep-and-nutrition-work-smarter-with-nea.pptx What is Love Food Love Science? Institute of Food Science and Technology	The Food a fact of life website and EDUQAS website have star profile proforma's that learners can use to help present the results of their practical experiments. There is also a PowerPoint on the open website which shows how to prepare for the NEA 1 task.
Referring back to the food science in NEA1	FoodCrumbles - Improving Food with Science - FoodCrumbles Food science (14-16 Years) - Food A Fact Of Life Eduqas Digital Educational Resources	These websites have many different articles on various food science topics that could possibly help with some NEA 1 tasks.

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

GCSE

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COMPONENT 1 - PRINCIPLES OF FOOD AND NUTRITION

Overview of the Component

The examination paper assesses AO1, AO2 and AO4. AO1 targets knowledge and understanding of aspects of subject content where candidates are asked to recall and supply concise answers. AO2 targets application of knowledge and understanding with candidates being asked to explain concepts and apply knowledge. AO4 targets analysis and evaluation of different aspects of nutrition, food cooking and preparation and candidates are asked to analyse evidence, evaluate issues or draw together information and make judgements.

The examination assesses the six areas of content:

- 1 Food commodities
- 2 Principles of nutrition
- 3 Diet and good health
- 4 The science of food
- 5 Where food comes from
- 6 Cooking and food preparation

The examination paper this year appears to have been accessible to candidates. There was a good mix of different examination style questions which enabled candidates of all abilities to access some marks on the different areas of content within the specification. The questions that examined aspects of principles of nutrition, food science, food spoilage and food manufacturing proved to be more challenging to many candidates. For future examinations it is important that all areas of content are covered. The use of subheadings for one of the essay style questions proved to be more beneficial for candidates in structuring their responses.

The following areas of content were well understood or well-answered:

- Q.2 (a)(b) (i)(ii) Principles of nutrition - oily fish.
- Q.3 Diet and Good Health – Government Guidelines for Healthy Eating – reducing salt in food groups.
- Q.4 (a)(b)(c) Commodities – eggs – labelling – safe food storage - factors affecting food choice – functions of eggs- food science.
- Q.5 (b) Skills groups and techniques – cake making.
- Q.6 (a) (i)(ii)(iii) (b)(c) (d) Skills groups and techniques – food safety - food packaging – factors affecting food choice
- Q.6 (b) Diet and good health – Government guidelines
- Q.7 (a)(b)(c) Principles of nutrition and Diet and Health – energy needs.
- Q.8 Diet and Health – Government guidelines- healthy eating in food groups.

Q.9 Food Provenance and Food Waste – Food wastage

Some candidates found some skill group and techniques questions difficult: 1(b)(c)(d)(f)

Areas for improvement include:

- Improving familiarisation with the 20 different skill groups.
- Practising the making of products or parts of products that demonstrate the different skill groups.
- Linking of practical skills with theory/written aspects before, during or after practical activities or by using visual images.

Many candidates found aspects of principles of nutrition, food science, food spoilage and food manufacturing difficult, particularly questions:

2 (c)

4 (d) (i)(ii)

5 (a)(c) (i)(iii)

6 (e) (i)(ii)

Areas to improve:

- Ensure familiarisation with all micronutrients listed in the specification; regular testing/quizzes/spot questioning could aid this.
- Covering of the science of cooking food, listed in the specification, through practical activities e.g. cake making, batters, pastry making, salad dressings as well as cross referencing different methods when using the product for practical activities or revisiting regularly through short topic tests/ lesson starter activities.
- Food manufacturing and the use of sensory analysis – understanding the different terms e.g. types of sensory analysis and the reasons for carrying it out.

General areas for improvement:

- Many candidates did not always read the question carefully which led to incorrect responses to questions asked.
- Some candidates still struggle with answering a question which requires a developed response.
- Encourage candidates to take notice of the number of marks awarded for each question to help them understand the type of response which is needed.
- Continue to develop understanding of command words used in the different questions set.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

Q.1 Visual stimuli question

- (a) Every candidate appeared to have attempted to answer the question, most candidates scored full marks. Candidates were not familiar with red pepper being a good source of vitamin C.
- (b) Most candidates answered this correctly, stating that the alternative ingredient suitable for a vegetarian was tofu or Quorn. Some candidates were unsure of what a vegetarian alternative to chicken was and gave another meat; pork/beef/ fish.
- (c) Candidates were not awarded marks if they referred to food safety rather than food quality and therefore were not awarded marks. Many candidates' answers included, stir regularly so that it stops the food from burning/ distribute flavours and do not use too much oil as this is more like shallow/ deep frying than stir frying/ food is greasy.
- (d)
 - (i) Many candidates answered with an answer of two basic responses; adds colour, flavour/ taste. Fewer candidates gave a point with a detailed answer; adds flavour so that the flavour is stronger/ enhanced/ improved.
 - (ii) Candidates tended to gain 1 mark only for explaining what a high biological food is, by responding that either protein or all essential amino acids were present but not explaining in more detail. Candidates had a good knowledge that there were 9 essential amino acids.
- (e) Many candidates were able to explain that stir frying is a fast, healthy/ low fat method of cooking. Quite a few candidates stated that it was an easy method because there was less washing up or pans used, which unfortunately did not gain any marks.
- (f) Most candidates attempted to explain the changes that occur when stir frying chicken and vegetables; most referenced the chicken changing colour and the vegetables turning soft/ retaining water soluble vitamins. There was evidence of scientific knowledge with some explaining the Maillard reaction. Some described how to stir fry the chicken and vegetables rather than describe the changes that occur in the chicken and vegetable when stir fried, and some described the cooking of noodles which unfortunately did not gain any marks.

Section B

- Q.2 (a) It was disappointing to see so many incorrect responses for this question. Many candidates incorrectly stated a micronutrient as protein, fat, carbohydrate or named foods, meat, fish, bread. Correct responses included calcium, vitamins, minerals, vitamin C and vitamin A.

- (b) (i) Many candidates could name at least one oily fish with tuna, salmon, sardines and mackerel being the most popular responses. Incorrect responses included white fish such as cod, haddock and sea bass.
- (ii) Many candidates were able to identify that oily fish had protein, fat, iron, calcium and omega 3. There was some misunderstanding by many candidates who misinterpreted the question by giving health advantages as opposed to nutritional benefits.
- (c) It was disappointing to see so many incorrect responses for this question. Some candidates correctly answered that the fish cooked quickly because it was thinner. Many candidates incorrectly stated it was because of the fat content.

Q.3 This question appeared to be quite accessible for candidates of all abilities and there were very few candidates who did not attempt the question. There were suggestions for reducing salt in the diet and discussion was given by most candidates. Marks from the lower mark bands were awarded when candidates had just listed points and had not discussed them or qualified them in terms of how and why this can be done e.g. do not add salt on food, look at labels. Marks from mark bands 3 and 4 were awarded when candidates had explained where salt could be reduced/ replaced and ways to achieve this with discussion.

- Q.4 (a) This question was well answered by most candidates, with most responding with, where the egg is from / place of origin/ farm ID/ Best before date.
- (b) The majority of candidates could identify where eggs should be stored correctly. Basic responses gave in a cool place/ fridge without any explanation why, to gain full marks two points had to be given with an explanation.
- (c) This question was well answered by many candidates. Candidates often compared battery and free-range hens living conditions and that it was a moral/ ethical reason. It was pleasing to see that candidates had a good understanding of factors that affect food choice.
- (d) (i) Most candidates were unable to define what is emulsification; candidates tended to only gain one mark for stating that it was the process of combining two immiscible liquids/ oil and water. Many candidates gave an example instead of a definition and unfortunately no marks were awarded.
- (ii) This question not well answered due to candidates not knowing what an emulsion was and could therefore not give an example. There were some candidates who gave correct responses, mayonnaise, ice cream. Some candidates responded with cakes, but had to state a creaming method cake, such as a Victoria Sponge.

- Q.5 (a) This question proved to be challenging for many candidates with some candidates leaving the question unanswered. Candidates that were familiar with the raising agents in cakes, correctly gave baking powder as the correct raising agent. Many candidates incorrectly gave baking soda and yeast as a raising agent used in cakes. Most candidates incorrectly gave yeast as the raising agent in a Yorkshire pudding. Very few candidates correctly gave steam/steaming as the raising agent used. For both food products there was a lack of application of food science knowledge when explaining how the raising agents worked.
- (b) Most candidates attempted both parts of the question to explain faults in cake making. Incorrect responses included in the sunken cake; too little fat/ sugar/ flour/ oven at wrong temperature but needed to specify too low. In the uneven cake, incorrect responses included oven at wrong temperature, but must specify too high, too much yeast.
- (c) (i) The majority of candidates were unable to name a sensory analysis test. Correct responses included triangle test, hedonic test, star diagram. Incorrect responses focussed on the sensory qualities, taste, smell, appearance.
- (ii) Most candidates were able to give two reasons for carrying out sensory analysis, with quality and standard being the most popular answers.
- (iii) This proved to be quite a challenging question with many candidates losing marks due to responding to the command word incorrectly, the question referred to how a tasting panel should be set up. Most candidates explained why not how. There was also some confusion on what a tasting panel is, most candidates were giving incorrect responses by mentioning giving samples away / tasters in shops. A lack of knowledge on sensory analysis prevented some candidates from accessing marks
- Q.6 (a) This question was well answered by most candidates, with washing hands after touching raw meat, use a red chopping board. Some candidates incorrectly gave instructions for cooking meat, whilst this question referred to raw meat.
- (b) This question was accessible for many candidates. A basic response such as use low fat mince gained 1 mark. A more developed response such as use 5% fat mince to reduce the fat content gained 2 marks. Many discussed using no oil, but the question referred to making the meatballs not cooking them.
- (c) Many candidates found outlining why minced beef is packaged in plastic accessible and most achieved 1-2 marks for stating a reason and explanation but no developed answer.
- (d) Most candidates had some knowledge of the red Tractor symbol, many responded that the food was from the U.K/ British farms.

In general, there seemed to be a lack of knowledge from candidates what the Red Tractor stands for.

- (e) (i) Most candidates gave incorrect responses for the method of heat transference, most incorrectly responded with convection.
 - (ii) Most candidates found this question challenging, candidates had to consider conduction and heat transfer being applied to the process of the meatballs.
- Q.7 (a) Most candidates were able to identify at least two ways the body uses energy. Correct answers given included, brain to function, exercise, grow, breathe. Some candidates mentioned sleeping which was not awarded a mark.
- (b) This question was answered by many candidates and awarded one mark for describing what PAL is but was not explained to gain the second mark.
- (c) Candidates often used the wording from the stem of the question in their responses for the differences between the two age groups. Most candidates gave mirrored answers, for example, a 15-year-old needs energy for growing whereas an 80-year-old is not growing. Candidates focussed on the points covered, growth, activity and mobility. Candidates also focussed on other nutrients instead of energy and therefore not awarded any marks.
- Q.8 This question was accessed by candidates of all abilities with at least 1-3 marks being gained by lower range candidates. There were many well-structured essays which focussed on introducing and encouraging healthy eating patterns in toddlers. Some candidates unfortunately did not progress up the mark bands due to not going into detail about the different ways that toddlers could be encouraged to eat healthily. A lot of candidates said to follow The Eatwell Guide, which is inappropriate for toddlers. Candidates had a good understanding, and suggestions were realistic and justified. Good responses included, homecooked food rather than take-aways/ ready meals, small portions, attractive shapes and colours, variety of foods, regular mealtimes and parents acting as role models. Candidates that justified the response with examples were awarded in the higher bands.
- Q.9 It was pleasing to see candidates' responses to this question; there was evidence of well written essays with detailed discussion with examples. This question appeared to be quite accessible for candidates of all abilities and there were very few candidates who did not attempt the question. The setting out of the three areas of reducing food waste when buying, preparing and cooking meals meant that candidates found this question accessible. The cooking and buying of food appeared to be stronger than the preparing of meals. Marks from the lower mark bands were awarded when candidates had just listed points and had not discussed them or qualified them in terms of reducing waste when buying, preparing or cooking foods. Marks from the middle mark bands for example band 2 and 3 were awarded when candidates had identified ways to reduce waste and then had included qualifying points in relation to the buying/ preparing and/or cooking of foods. Marks from bands 4 and 5 were awarded when candidates showed evidence of covering a range of points and then included full descriptions which demonstrated in depth application of knowledge and understanding in relation to reducing waste when buying/ preparing and cooking foods.

Some incorrect responses included the purchase of yellow sticker (short shelf life/reduced) foods, giving food to food banks and composting. Whilst some candidates discussed budgeting issues instead of reducing food waste.

Some candidates gave correct detailed responses on the difference between use by and best before dates and first in first out (FIFO).

Many candidates were assessed this series using nonstandard scripts e.g. Modified Language, Large print etc. and whilst these are an essential requirement for Eduqas to provide, to accommodate for specific eligible learners needs, it would support the examination process if candidates accessing these scripts were able to respond via one medium not a mix of both. At times, where candidates had used a Modified paper, but had then decided to type up responses on a separate sheet, this separate sheet was not always attached to the Modified paper.

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

GCSE

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COMPONENT 2 - FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION IN ACTION

Overview of the Component

As in previous series learners choose the focus from the briefs released in September and November 2024.

Overall, the outcomes of the assessments were comparable to last year.

The majority of centres guided candidates well, through both assessments.

Many centres had clearly acted on moderator feedback from 2024, and marking for both assessments was generally in line with Eduqas criteria, although For NEA 2 we are still seeing instances of overmarking in Section B.

Accessing the uploaded work was less problematic – thank you. To facilitate the moderation process, it is recommended that NEA 1 and NEA 2 be uploaded as separate documents, with the FP coversheets and NEA 2 practical marksheet included in each document. Additionally, photographic evidence of the candidates' practical outcomes can also be included in each NEA document. Some centres uploaded numerous documents, which made moderating the work extremely difficult and time-consuming. In the future, it is hoped that teachers will become more familiar with saving work as PDF documents and uploading them as separate NEAs.

Comments on individual tasks/sections

Assessment 1: The Food investigation Assessment

Section A

The majority of candidates conducted detailed research on the topic. While many candidates provided thorough research, some should consider summarising their findings to stay within the 2000 word limit. After conducting thorough research, candidates should be able to explain why they have chosen their experimental ingredients. Many candidates chose Task A - the Pasta task.

Both tasks were generally well-researched, with many candidates including in depth research about the function of ingredients in pasta and the science behind the use of flours in pasta. Task B (Emulsifiers), allowed students to carry out detailed research into a variety of emulsifiers that could be used.

Well-structured plans were included, but some candidates failed to justify their choice of variables. The research candidates conduct should help support their choice of variables. The majority of the work included predictions of varying levels of detail. Predictions need not be lengthy, but candidates should refer back to their research to justify their hypotheses.

Section B

The level of detail in this section varied among candidates. Some conducted a range of experiments, but there was a lack of photographic evidence with commentary, or the results were not tested using different formats. While some excellent examples of work were seen, there were instances where marks were generously awarded based on insufficient evidence.

For the Emulsifier task, experimental work could have involved varying the amount of emulsifier to assess the effect on the stability of the emulsion. Most testing had evidence of star profiles, viscosity charts and peer assessment was present, but more is needed to justify awarding marks from the top band in this section.

Regarding the Pasta task, candidates also explored using different ingredients and experimenting with ingredient ratios. When analysing results, many compared using sensory analysis, comparing colour using a Munsell Chart, star profiles, and measuring the elasticity with a ruler.

For Section B, candidates are expected to include a range of annotated photographs in their work. Unfortunately, there was a lack of diverse photographic evidence in many submissions this year. For the Emulsion task, photographs could have depicted the different stages of the investigation, the mixture before and after the emulsifier was added and then again after a certain amount of time. It is hoped that future candidates will include more photographic evidence. Encouraging candidates to take plenty of photos throughout their practical sessions will enhance their work. The name and candidate number should also be present in these photographs.

Candidates are expected to use a variety of formats and results to present their findings. Many opted for graphs, pie charts and line graphs. Advising candidates to use peer assessment and sensory preference testing will not only diversify their results presentation but also provide more opportunities for analysis.

Section C

This section is often challenging for candidates in this assessment. While many can describe their practical experiments, justifying marks from higher bands requires drawing conclusions from the data and explaining why the results occurred. These explanations should link back to the candidate's research and specifically address the scientific principles of the task, which is the most challenging aspect. Candidates are also required to evaluate their hypotheses and confirm whether their predictions were correct, providing explanations for their correctness or lack thereof. In some instances, candidates were awarded high marks for this section without discussing the scientific aspects of the task or reviewing their hypotheses. Given the time constraints of this assessment (8 hours as recommended by EDUQAS), Section C may also offer an opportunity for candidates to discuss further experimental work that could be conducted in the future.

For the Emulsifier task, candidates should discuss the scientific principles that may have influenced the outcome.

Regarding the Pasta task, candidates had numerous opportunities to discuss the scientific principles behind the gluten in the flour. Evaluation should discuss the science behind what happened but also discuss the sensory outcomes due to the type of flour that was used.

ASSESSMENT 2: THE FOOD PREPARATION ASSESSMENT

Section A

It was pleasing to see more evidence of primary research in candidates' work this year. Detailed analysis of both tasks would have seen greater numbers of candidates referring to all areas of the task rather than only focussing on one part. Some candidates included valuable pieces of primary research such as Take away menus and photographs of food they have tried, visits to restaurants/supermarkets, product analysis, questionnaires, and interviews. There was also less reliance on internet research compared to previous years. However, the value of mood boards as a method of research is questionable, particularly if they haven't been analysed to discuss their relevance. While a range of practical trials were observed, candidates must remember to include a picture of each trial dish made. Ideally the top band candidates should be trialling between 4-6 dishes. Evaluations covering nutrition, skills, cooking methods, and sensory qualities were seen in most of the moderated work. However, some candidates still include recipes, methods, ingredients lists and costings of each practical trial dish, which are not creditworthy and should be discouraged if not applicable to the task. Overall, this section was accurately marked in most of the moderated work.

Justification of dish choices was seen in many candidates' work this year, but often these lacked detail. Candidates should give detailed reasons for selecting the dishes and always refer back to the task.

Orders of work were generally detailed, but there is still room for improvement. Many candidates are still including a mise-en-place section. Although good practice, it is not a requirement of the NEA. The use of 'real time' is essential if the candidates can complete the practical in the 3-hour time limit. The use of colour coding for the different dishes is a good visual aid for candidates. Candidates provided good detail, and dovetailing is more evident, although some candidates still struggle with it. To ensure candidates are confident and proficient in dovetailing, it is recommended to provide practical and written dovetailing activities throughout Year 10 and Year 11 prior to starting NEA 2. Notably, some pieces of work included written points on serving and presenting dishes, along with visual images depicting how the dishes should look. This visual prompt may benefit many candidates, helping them present their dishes more attractively rather than relying solely on written bullet points. The specification states that the 3 dishes (and accompaniments) should be completed in a single 3-hour block of time and not over individual hours.

Section B

This year, there was a comprehensive range of dishes documented in the photographic evidence of candidates' work, and more teachers are using the NEA 2 practical marksheet to assess candidates' practical work. The practical marksheet facilitates fair and accurate marking of the practical session and allows moderators to understand how and why marks were awarded. However, some centres still generously mark the practical work. To award marks from the higher bands in these sections, candidates must demonstrate a range of well-executed high-level skills and excellent presentation using various techniques and garnishes to include accompaniments where suitable. Due to the work being uploaded on IAMIS from now on, candidates should include images of their dishes within the main body of their work for easy reference by moderators. Many candidates included individual photos of their dishes, but an overall photograph should also be included.

Section C

It was pleasing to see an improvement in the evaluation section. Many candidates referred to the task when evaluating their work. Sensory evaluation of their practical work should be included in this section – this could be from peers, family, teachers and themselves. This evaluation will inform them of improvements that could be made in the future. Many more candidates were evaluating their dishes against similar/existing ones. Some compared against other's practical work or used a shop/restaurant comparison. However, there are still centres whose candidates include costings and nutritional analyses in the evaluation sections—these are not required and are not creditworthy. The marking of this section was mostly accurate, and the evaluations covered all the necessary criteria.

To conclude:

Please remember that the NEA tasks change annually and differ from those in Wales (WJEC). Additionally, there will be online and face-to-face CPD opportunities in the autumn to support teachers delivering this qualification.

Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Tel: 029 2240 4262

Email: food@eduqas.co.uk

Qualification webpage: [GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition | Eduqas](#)

See other useful contacts here: [Useful Contacts | Eduqas](#)

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

Regional Rep Team

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