



GCSE Examiners' Report

Food and Nutrition
GCSE
Summer 2024

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 unit.

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	WJEC 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.wjec.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 WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	<p>Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade.</p> <p>For unitised 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 unit level.</p> <p>For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.</p>	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

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	WJEC 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.wjec.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 WJEC 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 WJEC

Contents

	Page
Executive summary	5
Unit 1 Principles of Food and Nutrition	9
Unit 2 Food and Nutrition in Action	11
Supporting you – useful contacts and links	19

Executive Summary

Unit 1 – 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 Unit 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 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 really well on extended responses and demonstrated sound understanding of the requirements of specific command verbs.

Unit 2 NEA 1 and NEA 2

Overall attainment this year has been very pleasing and candidates are demonstrating good application of knowledge and skills in these assessments.

Marking was generally in line with WJEC criteria and submission via the electronic platform was much more streamline this year - it is beneficial for centres to upload marksheets at the front of each piece of work, or in a marksheet folder Photographs within the work, rather than as separate uploads are helpful, e.g. before or within the evaluation, or even on the front cover.

Marking should also align to the statements within the mark bands and a “best fit” approach is welcomed, but annotation is critical to support this.

NEA 1 Generally well carried out, most had carried out clear research in Section A which linked to the brief, some lacked specific scientific information which made it difficult for candidates to gain the highest marks in the evaluation section.

Experimental work was well carried out, a few centres has used group work to carry out the tasks, to ease the financial burden and most had helpful photographic evidence. Some good practice seen was where candidates had a range of photographs throughout the making and evaluating process which gave them more to write about.

Conclusions were mixed, some candidates found it difficult to gain the highest mark band as they hadn't been encouraged to evaluate the science aspect and review their hypothesis. Some candidates reviewed in the experimenting section, but it would be beneficial for them to include an overall analysis in Section C. In order to access the full range of marks available, some candidates would benefit from more application of knowledge and personal viewpoints being developed in their write ups.

This element of the assessment is definitely back on track to pre- pandemic standards.

NEA 2

This is always the strongest assessment for the majority of candidates and this year was no exception. Candidates clearly spend a lot of time researching what dishes and accompaniments they wished to make, and testing and trialling options but, again to access the full range of marks for section A and section B clearer links to the focus of the brief is still recommended. There is a definite improvement in Orders of work, with most centres using the 3 part format. Trial evaluations and Reasons for choice failed to gain the higher marks when they did not follow the headings in the specification. Practical execution skills continue to be strong and show mostly sound attention to detail.

Evaluations were mostly well produced but some candidates would access more marks with additional adherence to the specific content within the mark bands For Section D.

Some exceptional work was seen this series.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
Unit 1	Portal (wjec.co.uk)	Past papers & MS
	WJEC OER Website	Online exam review
	WJEC GCSE Food and Nutrition EWT.pptx (live.com)	Exam walkthrough
	Resource WJEC Educational Resources Website	Knowledge organisers HWB Effect of cooking on commodities Nutrition principles Food provenance
	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	Free resources

Unit 2		
Uploading of work	WWW.WJEC.CO.UK/MEDIA/WRRBH AAP/E-SUBMISSION-IAMIS-UPLOAD-SUBJECT-GUIDE-2024.PDF	This resource explains the format for uploading work onto IAMIS. Page 57 is specifically for Food & Nutrition.
NEA 1 – Food science knowledge and understanding	https://foodcrumbles.com/ HTTPS://WWW.FOODAFACTOFLIFE.ORG.UK/14-16-YEARS/FOOD-SCIENCE-14-16-YEARS/ Resource WJEC Educational Resources Website	These websites have many different articles on various food science topics that could possibly help with some NEA 1 tasks.
NEA 1 – Star profiles to help present results for Section B of NEA 1	https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/resources/?q=star%20profile HTTPS://WWW.WJEC.CO.UK/UMBRACO/SURFACE/BLOBSTORAGE/DO WNLOAD?NODEID=5383 https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/115pjql0/work-smarter-not-harder-nea-1-wjec-final-version.pptx	The Food a fact of life website and WJEC website have star profile proforma's that candidates can use to help present the results of their practical experiments for Section B of NEA 1. There is also a PowerPoint on the open website which shows how to prepare for the NEA 1 task.
NEA 2 – Justification of choice	wjec.co.uk/umbraco/surface/blobstorage/download?nodeid=5378 _ GfT Portal (wjec.co.uk)	P81 Guidance for teaching. There are several exemplars on the portal showing good practice.
NEA 2 – Time plan	Portal (wjec.co.uk)	There are several exemplars on the portal showing good practice.
NEA 2 – Practical skills	HTTPS://WWW.WJEC.CO.UK/UMBRACO/SURFACE/BLOBSTORAGE/DO WNLOAD?NODEID=50748 https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/tbufmvbx/upskilling-recipes.pptx WJEC Educational Resources Website wjec.co.uk/umbraco/surface/blobstorage/download?nodeid=5378 _ GfT wjec.co.uk/umbraco/surface/blobstorage/download?nodeid=5373 - Spec	The WJEC website has some guidance for what skills are classed as High/Complex, Medium and Basic/Low. The guidance also gives some explanation on how to assess practical dishes. There is a PowerPoint on how to upskill recipes. There are several videos on skills. The Guidance for teaching pp56-76 has a comprehensive list of dishes and skills noted as does the specification pp24-26.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 1 PRINCIPLES OF FOOD AND NUTRITION

Overview of the Unit

The examination paper covered AO1, AO2, and AO4 assessment objectives, and addressed all required content areas of Unit 1. Its format was consistent with previous years., and outcomes overall aligned.

Candidates' responses were often thorough and in-depth, demonstrating a greater confidence and a higher level of knowledge and understanding. Some candidates would benefit from fully understanding command words and reading questions carefully and answering with information specific to what is being asked. Many candidates attempted the extended questions successfully, but as expected across the full cohort responses varied significantly in length and demonstrated varying levels of knowledge.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Section A

This section was well attempted with nearly all candidates attempting the questions. The visual stimuli included aided the accessibility of the questions.

Q.1 Most candidates were able to answer the sub sections within this question. Most candidates demonstrated good knowledge of eggs as a commodity, their nutritional properties, and their role in the diet. High quality responses were able to adapt the egg custard tart to follow current dietary trends with most candidates focussing on sugar and fat content.

Section B

Q.2 Candidates displayed limited knowledge regarding the name of the Food Probe and its effective use. Most candidates understood the link to food safety, demonstrated good understanding of why it is used but limited knowledge and understanding of how it is used correctly. Candidates provided good examples of high-risk foods.

Q.3 There was a wide and varied range of responses. Most candidates correctly identified carbon dioxide as the gas that causes bread to rise but showed limited knowledge of the different methods for incorporating air into food. Although part (d) was well answered, with candidates understanding the reasons why a batch of scones might not rise and linking it to ratio or incorrect choice of ingredients.

Q.4 This question was challenging for many candidates, leading to a significant number of attempted responses or those with varying degrees of accuracy. However, some candidates demonstrated an understanding of the uses of additives and were able to evaluate their use effectively.

- Q.5 A well answered question with strong responses. Most candidates were able to state the changes Rhys needed to make to meet dietary guidelines. However, since this was an "analyse" question, candidates needed to provide reasons for the adaptations to receive full marks. Some candidates did not read the question correctly and failed to discuss both lifestyle and diet to meet government guidelines. As a result, they could not be awarded marks for simply stating "sleep more" or "cut down on espresso coffee." Candidates should be encouraged to evaluate more and give the reason as to why something is or is not suitable and the effect it has on health.
- Q.6 Most candidates were able to access marks for parts (a) and (b) allowing them to demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding.
- Part(c) (ii) was more challenging and candidates either knew the answer or not with many not attempting the question.
- Part(c) (ii) many candidates could suggest why individuals should reduce sugar in the diet but with little application as to the reasons why. There was also a misconception by a of number of candidates to a link with cholesterol and sugar.
- Q.7 The first part of this question was answered well by most candidates, who were able to name products made with soya beans and suggest ways to enhance the flavour. Many candidates were able to name specific herbs and spices. For part (c), candidates were able to give reasons why plant foods have become more popular, however, they provided little application of these reasons. Candidates did not fully demonstrate the command word "discuss," which prevented them from accessing the higher marks.
- Q.8 This question was accessible to most candidates giving very good ways in which consumers could save money on their shopping. However, answers mainly related to shopping. Higher ability candidates were able to discuss ways in which families could save money whilst shopping and methods of cooking, such as using all parts of the cooker to make several recipes.

Moving forward/recommendations

- Most candidates were well-prepared for the examination; however, some would benefit from more in-depth knowledge of Unit 1 content, and command verbs.
- Literacy remains a concern, as some responses are difficult to interpret due to poor handwriting. Please remember this examination is available as a "on-line" option, and sitting via this medium can benefit all levels of learners contact e-assessment@wjec.co.uk for more information.
- Centres are advised to encourage future students to read questions carefully, as reading questions incorrectly remains a weakness for some candidates. Misunderstanding questions, not understanding subject specific terminology or command words, prevents candidates from achieving higher marks.

UNIT 2 FOOD AND NUTRITION IN ACTION

Overview of the Unit

The assessment covered AO2, AO3 and AO4 assessment objectives, and assessed Unit 2 content. Its format was consistent with previous years, two assessment choices were released for NEA1 and NEA2.

Overall, the standard of work and marking this across Wales this year has been very encouraging. It was pleasing to see a number of teachers attend the numerous CPD events that have taken place this past academic year. By attending the CPD events, many teachers have deepened their knowledge of the specification, and in turn the mark scheme, enabling them to more accurately mark the NEA's. Although the marking was accurate overall, there are still some areas that need improvement that are outlined in the comments below.

E-submission of work directly onto IAMIS is now in its second year, and the majority of centres do appear to have mastered this process. Guidance on e-submission is available on the WJEC website, with specific advice for each subject listed. The guidance for GCSE Food & Nutrition is listed on page 57. Both NEA tasks and relevant administration submitted should all be included in one document. Some centres uploaded separate documents for each NEA which is acceptable. What is not acceptable is the uploading of numerous individual documents for each candidate. When more than a maximum of two documents are uploaded per candidate, this can severely impact on the moderation process. Some centres would benefit from familiarising themselves with saving work as PDF documents to allow the easy upload of the required work onto IAMIS. Uploading work directly also meant that the majority of centres adhered to the 5th May submission deadline, with a number of centres uploading work prior to this deadline. This greatly aided the moderation process. Thank you.

The majority of FN coversheets were annotated, but some teachers still do not provide any comments on the coversheets. Similarly, some NEA 2 practical mark sheets were either missing or had not been completed. Whilst it is only a recommendation that annotation is provided on the FN coversheets and the NEA 2 practical mark sheet, annotation is an invaluable resource to enable the moderator to see where, how and why marks have been awarded. Authentication of candidates' work was completed in the majority of the work seen this year which was pleasing to see.

There are word/page limits set for each task – NEA 1 has a word limit of 2000-2500 words. NEA 2 has a limit of no more than 30 side of A4. NEA 2 very rarely sees any issues with candidates exceeding the page limit, and this was the case again this year. On the other hand, for NEA 1, we are seeing instances year on year, of the word limit being exceeded and this was the case again this year. There should be no issue with candidates being able to achieve high marks whilst adhering to the word limit. There will be times where candidates, usually the top end candidates, who go into significant detail with their work, struggle to keep within the limit and so may exceed the word count by a few hundred words; this is not a major concern. What is of major concern is where we are seeing candidates who are submitting pieces of work for NEA 1 that are 6000 – 7000 words long. This is unacceptable and brings into question whether the time allowance is being adhered to. (the WJEC guidance states that 10hrs should be spent on NEA 1).

The moderators' reports sent to each centre will have highlighted any problematic marking and any administration issues, whilst if marking was in line with the specification criteria then the moderators report would have been short and concise. There were a number of clerical errors seen this year, whereby the marks on the FN coversheets did not match the marks that had been entered on the WJEC website. Please can centres ensure that they check the marks that are being entered for each candidate match the marks that have been given on the FN sheets.

Tasks

Comments on tasks/questions relating to candidate performance/meeting assessment criteria

NEA 1

The majority of the candidates whose work was moderated this year chose the 'Shortbread' task.

Section A

The research section is usually completed well for NEA 1, and the same can be said for this year, but I would still recommend that candidates try and summarise their research section to help them stay within the 2000-2500 word limit. Some excellent examples of concise research were seen and it is hoped that we see more next year. Justification of choices of variables were seen in more of the work this year, but some candidates are still missing this out yet were awarded high marks from Band 3.

In some of the work seen this year, some candidates had completed some practical experimentation as part of their research section which was interesting to see. I believe that this would have deepened the candidate's knowledge of the subject area and is something that I would encourage centres to consider when guiding candidates through Section A of this task.

The shortbread task was well researched as the task allowed a range of opportunities for different areas of research to be completed. Different types of sugar, different types of sweeteners and government advice for healthy eating were all areas that could have been researched. With regards to the science involved, many candidates had discussed caramelisation and some had included the Maillard reaction, but very few had discussed the hygroscopic ability of sugar to attract water and retain moisture. Many candidates had also missed the opportunity to describe the characteristics of a good shortbread biscuit – this is an area that should have been researched due to the fact that when candidates came to discuss and compare their experimental biscuits, they should have had a clear description of the correct characteristics a good shortbread biscuit should have been to enable them to make a comparison with the biscuits they had made for their experiments.

With regards to the enzymic browning task, the research focussed on what enzymic browning is, methods to slow it down or prevent it and what fruit and vegetables are affected by the process. Whilst the majority of candidates researched what enzymic browning is and explained about the oxidation of the fruit or vegetables, not many had researched the specific science behind the reaction. There were a few excellent examples of research involving information being provided about Polyphenol Oxidase (PPO) and how enzymes affect the browning of fruit and vegetables. Some samples of work moderated also mentioned how different fruit and vegetables contained different amounts of PPO and also that different varieties of the same fruit and vegetables had different amounts of PPO, but these examples were in the minority. The majority of candidates had researched the different methods of preventing or slowing down enzymic browning and had planned their experiments around these different methods.

Section B

This year, some teachers in some centres have opted to demonstrate / make the control product for the practical section, this is now deemed permissible to reduce food costs. This has also the added benefit of candidates' having an accurate control product to compare their experiments to. In previous years, there have been occasions whereby the candidates have spent too much time making the control product and have also incorrectly made the control product which then means that their variable comparison to the control can be incorrect.

There was a noticeable difference in the practical experimentation of the two different tasks. For the shortbread task, many candidates had completed experiments using different types of sugar, using different amounts of sugar or using artificial sweeteners to make the shortbread. Some candidates then used Munsell colour charts to assess colour variations, rulers to measure shrinkage or expansion and star profiles and peer assessment to record sensory qualities of the results. However, in some of the work seen, the range of photographic evidence was disappointing. The shortbread task allowed the opportunity for photos to be included of the creamed sugar and butter mixture, the completed dough, the cut biscuits prior to cooking and the biscuits after they had been cooked. This range of photos would have afforded the candidates an opportunity to discuss variations in the texture, consistency and colour of the doughs, along with any other issues that were encountered during the production and cooking of the biscuits. With regards to how to layout out the pictures, creating a table and inserting the pictures into a table allows the work to be more concise and also allows for the photos to be annotated without taking up an excessive amount of space on a page. Some candidates had missed the opportunity to include a range of photos and had only included photos of the cooked shortbread. Whilst we appreciate that photographic costs may be an issue, where learners have more photographs we tended to see more detail in their discussions as they had something to refer back to.

With regards to the enzymic browning task, candidates had experimented with using different fruit and vegetables, recording changes at different time intervals and using different methods to prevent enzymic browning such as coating the fruit or vegetable with an acidic ingredient (most commonly lemon juice) or covering the fruit or vegetable. There was little evidence seen of candidates freezing or cooking the fruit or vegetable to stop the enzymic browning process which would have allowed the candidates an opportunity to explain why this happened. There was also an opportunity to use different varieties of certain fruits and vegetables, for example apples, as a focus for the practical experimentation to see the differences in enzymic browning between them, but very few candidates had done this. There was evidence of a range of photos included of the different stages of enzymic browning at different time intervals. Peer testing would have been more difficult for this task, but candidates could have still asked peers to comment on the appearance of the different fruits and vegetables and recorded these results in their work. In some of the work seen, there were pages and pages of tables of results included which should have been summarised to make the work more concise and more reader friendly.

It is worth remembering that one of the specification criteria to justify the awarding of marks from the top band in Section B is that the results are presented in a logical manner and using a range of different formats.

Section C presents candidates with an opportunity to explain their results, draw conclusions, discuss the scientific principles behind their results and review their hypothesis. This is still quite a challenging section for some candidates, but we are seeing less instances of candidates describing their results and taking more of an analytical approach, which is pleasing.

For the enzymic browning task, candidates should have discussed the reasons how the different methods of preventing or slowing down the browning process had affected their chosen fruit and/or vegetable. This should have led to a discussion about how the enzymes were affected and also whether the pH had also played a part in the browning of the fruit and vegetables. Had candidates looked at cooking or freezing their chosen fruit and/or vegetable then they would have had an opportunity to discuss the reasons why the enzymic browning had stopped, but there were no examples of this in any of the work moderated.

In the shortbread task, candidates should have discussed the variations in the colour and taste of their biscuit due to the amount of sugar they used in their experiments and how this affected the caramelisation. They should have also had an opportunity to discuss the effect that using sweeteners would have had on their biscuit had they decided to experiment with sweeteners. The consistency and texture of the biscuit prior to and after cooking should have given rise to a discussion around the hygroscopic properties of sugar and how this cannot be replicated with a sweetener.

Had candidates had space within their word count then they could have discussed possible further experimental work that could have been undertaken as a further development.

NEA 2

Both the 'Eggs' and 'Wales' tasks were equally popular this year.

Section A A good range of primary research was evident in the candidates' work this year. Year on year, more and more candidates are using a range of primary research techniques such as product analysis, takeaway or restaurant analysis, interviews and questionnaires. Internet research is a good form of research to start the NEA task and it is pleasing to see less candidates using it as their main form of research. Mood boards are becoming less prevalent, but there are still some candidates that are using it as a form of research and I would question the value of it as a form of creditable research. Where primary research has been carried out, candidates need to remember to analyse their findings in relation to what they have done, why they did it and how it will help inform decisions. It is advised that two or three good pieces of research, together with high skilled practical trials that have been fully evaluated are evident to justify the awarding of marks from the top band.

For the Eggs task, research included types of eggs, methods of farming and the nutrition of eggs. There was also evidence of candidates researching dishes that included eggs and questionnaires asking about people's egg eating habits.

With regards to the Wales task, there was evidence of census data being used to highlight Wales' multicultural society, restaurant visits looking at multicultural foods and some candidates narrowed down their research to specifically focus on their country of choice.

With regards to the practical trials, they are an opportunity to make dishes that would satisfy the task. Should a candidate be aiming for marks from the top band for the research section then it is expected that mostly medium and high skilled dishes are evident, accompanied by a detailed evaluation of each dish trialled with reference to the nutrition, skills, cooking methods and sensory qualities of the dishes. There are still a number of candidates that do not cover all of these specification criteria. There is also no need to include costings, recipes and methods for the trialled dishes as these are not creditworthy; candidates' time would be better spent ensuring they have completed the evaluation of each trial in sufficient detail.

Section B (i) Many candidates struggle to achieve the full six marks for this section as the specification points are not detailed enough and don't always cover all the specification criteria. Candidates need to ensure that they discuss each of the four criteria points for each of their dishes. A suggestion to aid candidates would be that they use sub-headings for each of the criteria points for each of the dishes they are discussing; this may enable them to write in sufficient detail and also ensure they have not missed anything out. There are still some centres that are encouraging their candidates to complete selection and rejection grids/tables, and as was mentioned in last year's report – these are not required, are not creditworthy.

Section B (ii) Orders of work are continually improving each year, and one focus of the CPD this year was completing a timeplan, but there are still areas within this section that need to be addressed. There are still far too many mise en place sections that are lacking detail and only include basic instructions which may only take a matter of minutes to complete. The mise en place section should encompass all preparatory tasks to be completed before cooking the dishes, such as preparing ingredients, lining tins, collecting and setting up pieces of equipment, making doughs (pasta/bread/pastry), or any other suitable tasks. Simply allocating five minutes in the mise en place section for basic preparation is insufficient. The cooking section was completed in good detail with dovetailing evident, but candidates need to remember to include washing up points throughout the cooking section and ensure that health, safety and hygiene points are included. Where the serving section was completed in good detail, detailed statements were included on how to garnish and present the dishes and more and more candidates are including images in this section as a visual reminder for how they want their completed dishes to look. It is worth noting that visual prompts should be an addition to written statements, not a substitution. In some of the work seen, methods and recipes were included for the choice of dishes, in addition to the completed dovetailed method. There is only a requirement to include a completed, dovetailed time plan, complete with an ingredients list; the individual methods for each dish are not required in addition.

Section C There were some excellent skills demonstrated in the photographic evidence of the candidates work this year. Some highlights of high level skills seen include portioning and de-boning chicken, fish filleting, squid preparation and cooking for calamari, a range of egg work including custard, ice cream and meringues, and gelatine use in the setting of desserts. A number of centres are using the practical marksheet to record the marks for this section, but some centres just include the marks without any annotation. The annotation on these sheets helps the moderators to see how and why the marks have been awarded as without any annotation on the practical marksheets all the moderators have to moderate the work is the images that have been included in the work. The annotation could include information such as what skills were demonstrated and how well they were executed, how organised was the candidate throughout the practical session and what techniques were used for garnishing and decoration. With regards to the photographic evidence that should be included of the practical work, it is recommended that a close up photo of each dish is included in the evaluation section along with a photograph of all dishes together.

On the whole, the marking for this section was in line with the specification criteria, but there are still some centres that are marking this section generously, particularly the preparation skills section and the presentation of final dishes section. For the preparation skills section, for Band 4 marks, not only is it expected that a range of skills have been executed with an excellent level of competence displayed, but the skills should be mostly high level skills. For Band 4 marks in the presentation skills section, presented dishes should demonstrate excellent attention to detail, accurate portion control (where required) and the use of skilful garnishes. Some of the marks awarded for these two sections appeared to be generous in some instances.

Section D This section is one that candidates should be able to perform well in. The use of sub-headings has long been advised to enable candidates to complete their evaluations in sufficient detail. There are some candidates though that do not include enough detail to justify some of the marks awarded, and some centres need to pay more attention to what is required from the mark scheme when awarding marks in this section.

When discussing the time management of the practical session, candidates need to evaluate all three sections of their practical session (mise en place, cooking and serving) in relation to how well each section went with regards to timings. By using sub heading and commenting on each individual section, this should enable candidates to include sufficient detail to justify the awarding of the full two marks.

For the technical skills section, in much of the work moderated, candidates discussed what skills they performed without actually commenting on how well they executed the skills. Candidates need to include an honest appraisal on how well they performed their skills and if there were any issues or problems. If the skills were executed with precision and confidence, then why was that the case? Had they practiced them beforehand at home or in lesson?

The sensory qualities commentary needs to include more technical terminology in the evaluation comments. Many candidates are able to achieve three out of the four marks available but need the addition of more technical terminology to enable them to access the full four marks.

Finally, when discussing modifications and improvements, centres need to remember that candidates can discuss any modifications and improvements that could be made to the time plan that they used in the practical session, as well as the practical session and dishes made.

To conclude

As mentioned in last year's report, moderators' reports are now more concise. Should the centre marks be fair and accurate, then the report will state this without going into much further detail. Where there have been issues with marking for particular sections of the NEA's then the moderators report will highlight these and provide detail on where the marking was generous or harsh.

The NEA tasks change annually and differ from those in England (Eduqas). A new GCSE Food & Nutrition specification has been developed for teaching from September 2025 and so this current GCSE Food & Nutrition specification only has two more years of entries before we move over to the new specification. The new draft specification is available to view on the WJEC website.

Task marking

Comments on approaches to internal marking

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: 02920404262

Email: food@wjec.co.uk

Qualification webpage: [GCSE Food and Nutrition \(wjec.co.uk\)](https://www.wjec.co.uk/gcse-food-and-nutrition)

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

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.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/>

WJEC Qualifications

As Wales' largest awarding body, WJEC supports its education community by providing trusted bilingual qualifications, specialist support, and reliable assessment to schools and colleges across the country. This allows our learners to reach their full potential.

With more than 70 years' experience, we are also amongst the leading providers in both England and Northern Ireland.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk