



# **GCSE Examiners' Report**

Food Preparation 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 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.	<a href="https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/">https://www.eduqas.co.uk/home/professional-learning/</a>
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.	<a href="#">Portal by WJEC</a> 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 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 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 unitised specifications click here:</p> <p><a href="#">Results and Grade Boundaries and PRS (eduqas.co.uk)</a></p>

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<sup>1</sup> 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.	<a href="#">Portal by WJEC</a>
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.	<a href="https://resources.edugas.co.uk/">https://resources.edugas.co.uk/</a>
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.	<a href="#">Portal by WJEC</a> 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.	<a href="#">Become an Examiner   Eduqas</a>

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Component 1 – External Assessment**

The examination paper was of a very similar standard to previous examination series and outcomes generally aligned. The examination team felt that candidates really related to the topics and question types this series – which was very pleasing.

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 and application. 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 span all subject content and include a range of question types and this year was no exception. Some candidates did far better in Section B than in section A which was fairly unusual but holistically still attained a good standard overall.

There was also evidence, throughout quite a few questions, 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 still miss out on achieving the higher bands for extended writing responses as they give superficial explanations and unsupported judgements. However, we did feel there was an improvement in this for some candidates this year, which was very pleasing to see.

### **Component 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 Eduqas 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 candidates 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, and most folios had helpful photographic evidence. Some centres which demonstrated good practice had encouraged candidates to include a range of photographs throughout the making and evaluating process which then gave candidates more to write about.

Conclusions were mixed, some candidates found it difficult to gain the highest mark band where they hadn't been encouraged to evaluate the science aspect and review their hypothesis. Some candidates reviewed in the experimenting section, which does allow for marks to be awarded but it would still 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. However, we are seeing an improvement in this assessment and more and more candidates are demonstrating sound Food science knowledge and understanding, both in this assessment and in their examination responses as applicable.

## NEA 2

This is always the strongest assessment for the majority of candidates and this year was no exception. Candidates related well to the set assessments and clearly spend a lot of time researching what dishes and accompaniments they wished to make, and testing and trialling options to select and reject dishes was improved. However, in order to access the full range of marks for section A clearer links to the focus of the brief is still recommended. There is a definite improvement in orders of work, with most centres encouraging candidates to use the 3 part format. Reference to health and safety is generally well documented, and methods are becoming more detailed, which is good to see. Trial evaluations and Reasons for choice still failed to gain the higher marks when they did not follow the headings in the specification. Practical execution skills for the three dishes and accompaniments 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.

Areas for improvement	Classroom resources	Brief description of resource
<b>Component 1</b>	<a href="http://wjec.co.uk">Portal (wjec.co.uk)</a>	Past paper and mark schemes
Examination Technique: command verbs, extended writing, application of knowledge	<a href="http://edugas.co.uk">Resource (edugas.co.uk)</a>	Exam walk through
Granularity of subject content e.g. Micro-nutrients	<a href="http://edugas.co.uk">Edugas Digital Educational Resources</a>	Knowledge organisers
Subject content	<a href="http://edugas.co.uk">Resource (edugas.co.uk)</a>	Thinking tools
Subject content	<a href="http://www.edugas.co.uk/media/2/tidxo3g/edugas-gcse-food-preparation-and-nutrition-upskilling-recipes.pptx">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</a>	Resources for teaching
Subject content	<a href="http://edugas.co.uk">Resource (edugas.co.uk)</a>	BBC class clips
Subject content	<a href="http://edugas.co.uk">Edugas Digital Educational Resources</a>	Effect of cooking on commodities
<b>Component 2</b>	<a href="http://wjec.co.uk">Portal (wjec.co.uk)</a>	Exemplars
NEA 2	<a href="http://edugas.co.uk">Resource (edugas.co.uk)</a>	Illuminate video for skills
NEA 2	<a href="http://edugas.co.uk">Resource (edugas.co.uk)</a>	Food preparation skills videos
NEA 2	<a href="https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/2/tidxo3g/edugas-gcse-food-preparation-and-nutrition-upskilling-recipes.pptx">https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/2/tidxo3g/edugas-gcse-food-preparation-and-nutrition-upskilling-recipes.pptx</a>	PowerPoint – upskilling recipes

NEA1	<a href="https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/ttkfmyuk/edugas-gcse-food-prep-and-nutrition-work-smarter-with-nea.pptx">https://www.edugas.co.uk/media/ttkfmyuk/edugas-gcse-food-prep-and-nutrition-work-smarter-with-nea.pptx</a>	PowerPoint – work smarter not harder
NEA 1 & 2	<a href="#">GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition   Edugas</a>	Open website – Star diagrams Mark sheets Viscosity charts Practical skills sheets Sensory vocabulary poster Specification Guidance for teaching
Step-by-step photos of the NEA1 throughout the investigation. NEA 2 photograph of all the dishes together on a table as well as individual dishes.	iPad / camera. Get candidates to take photos on their phones if school policy allows. It is an examination.	
Complete a variety of sensory tests	<a href="https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/resources/?q=star%20profile">https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/resources/?q=star%20profile</a>  <a href="#">GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition   Edugas</a>  <a href="https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.edugas.co.uk%2Fmedia%2Fttkfm%2Fedugas-gcse-food-prep-and-nutrition-work-smarter-with-nea.pptx&amp;wdOrigin=BROWSELINK">https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.edugas.co.uk%2Fmedia%2Fttkfm%2Fedugas-gcse-food-prep-and-nutrition-work-smarter-with-nea.pptx&amp;wdOrigin=BROWSELINK</a>  <a href="#">What is Love Food Love Science?   Institute of Food Science and Technology (ifst.org)</a>	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.



<p>Referring back to the food science in NEA1</p>	<p>Text books – Illuminate</p> <p><a href="https://foodcrumbles.com/">https://foodcrumbles.com/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.foodafactoflife.org.uk/14-16-years/food-science-14-16-years/">HTTPS://WWW.FOODAFACTOFLIFE.ORG.UK/14-16-YEARS/FOOD-SCIENCE-14-16-YEARS/</a></p> <p><a href="#">Edugas Digital Educational Resources</a></p>	<p>These websites have many different articles on various food science topics that could possibly help with some NEA 1 tasks.</p>
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# **FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION**

## **GCSE**

**Summer 2024**

### **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. Principals 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 principals 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) Diet and good health - healthy eating guidelines.
- Q.3 (a) (i)(ii)(iii) The science of food - food spoilage, storing of foods, refrigeration / freezing, food spoilage signs and micro-organisms.
- Q.4 Cooking and food preparation - factors affecting food choice.
- Q.5 (a) (ii) Food spoilage – storage of food.
- Q.5 (c) (i)(ii) Diet and good health - plan balanced diets.
- Q.6 (a) (i)(ii)(iii)(iv) Skill groups and techniques – judge and manipulate sensory properties, dry heat and fat based methods using the hob.

Some candidates found some skill group and techniques questions difficult:

1(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)

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 principals of nutrition, food science, food spoilage and food manufacturing difficult.

2(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)

3(b)(i)(ii)

7(a)(b)(c)(i)

Areas to improve:

- Ensure familiarisation with all micronutrients listed in the specification, regular testing/quizzes/spot questioning could aid this.
- Covering of the different preservation methods listed in the specification through practical activities e.g. pickling, jam making as well as cross referencing different preserving methods when using product for practical activities or revisiting regularly through short topic tests/ lesson starter activities.
- Food manufacturing and the use of additives – understanding the different terms e.g. flavour intensifiers, colourings and how additives can change a food product.

General area for improvement:

- Many candidates did not always read the question carefully which led to incorrect preparation tasks, stages of making and changes in mixtures (Swiss roll) being recorded as 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, very few candidates scored full marks. Candidates were not familiar with the method used to make the Swiss roll or how the flour is folded in.
- (b) Many candidates did not read the question correctly and gave generic points for preparing food in general. Marks were gained through identification of points such as preheating oven, greasing and lining the tin.
- (c)
  - (i) Candidates were not awarded marks if they referred to an incorrect product being made such as, meringues or pastry. Candidates that correctly referred to the changes taking place when whisking eggs and sugar such as volume of mixture increasing, trapping of air and even eggs denaturing were able to access most of the marks available.
  - (ii) Many candidates were able recognise when the flour can be added in the making of a Swiss roll with the most popular correct response being, the mixture will leave ribbons or trails on the surface. Candidates that referred to meringue making and tipping the bowl upside down to check the mixture does not fall out were not awarded any marks.
- (d) The stopping of air escaping and the retaining of the shape or structure of the Swiss roll were the most popular responses for this question. Incorrect responses referred to the eggs being a high risk food and the growing of bacteria.
- (e) Many candidates were able to explain the scientific changes that take place when baking a Swiss roll and applied good knowledge and understanding. References to dextrinisation, coagulation, caramelisation or maillard reaction were present in many responses. Basic responses such as the cake rises or the colour changes to a golden brown were suitable fit for band 1 of the assessment criteria. Some candidates did not read the question correctly or were confused by what the question was asking and discussed methods of heat transference which unfortunately did not gain any marks.

### Section B

- Q.2** (a) Many candidates answered this question correctly by making reference to the Eatwell guide, NHS advice and 5 a day. Candidates that did not read the question correctly and missed the terms dietary guidelines and then responded by giving a list of nutrients or foods were not awarded any marks.

- (b)** Assess was the command word used in this question which means candidates should judge the importance of including water in the daily diet, give consideration to all the factors that apply, and give positive and negative viewpoints. Many candidates were able to name and at times demonstrate good knowledge of constipation, the importance of water for the making up of body fluids, the use of water to aid digestion and the importance of keeping hydrated and the prevention of dehydration. Many candidates were not able to access the full marks due to just stating a factor such as dehydration but then not explaining the 'how' and the 'why' of this factor.
- (c)**
- (i)** It was disappointing to see so many incorrect responses for this question. Many candidates incorrectly stated the sun, oranges, spinach, cheese, bread and bananas.
  - (ii)** Many candidates answered this question correctly with calcium being the most popular response. Incorrect responses included iron and protein.
  - (iii)** There was general understanding about the sun being a source of vitamin D but many candidates were not able to identify a group of people who may be at risk of a vitamin D deficiency. Correct responses included pregnant women and babies and young children.
  - (iv)** Many candidates were able to gain one mark by a basic function of vitamin D with strong bones, strong teeth and aiding a healthy immune system. Some candidates were able to provide a more developed response and gain two marks. The question was asking for problems caused by a deficiency, not all candidates gave more than one problem so at times a mark was lost and no credit was given for healthy bones and teeth. The checking of the number of marks awarded for each question must be reinforced.
- Q.3**
- (a)**
- (i)** Most candidates were able to identify at least one way foods become contaminated, many candidates were able to secure full marks. It was pleasing to see candidates using technical terms like physical or chemical contamination.
  - (ii)** This question was well answered by many candidates. The smell of food was a popular response put forward but it needed to be qualified to gain the mark for example; the smell could be sour, rancid, bad. Many candidates demonstrated good knowledge of mould, with popular answers referring to the discolouration of a food.
  - (iii)** Many candidates answered this question correctly identifying two types of food spoilage micro-organisms with bacteria, yeast or mould/fungi.

- (b)**      **(i)(ii)**    This proved to be quite a challenging question with many candidates losing marks due to incorrect preservation methods being named. Candidates must be instructed to use correct terminology for example; 'freezing' as a method rather than 'freezer'. Many candidates were able to secure marks for a correct description of the method even though the named method was incorrect. Many candidates described the process of preservation rather than how the method they had identified actually preserves the food. There was confusion by many about the fridge or freezer killing bacteria. A lack of knowledge on the different preservation methods prevented some candidates from accessing marks.

**Q.4** 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 two distinct areas buying foods and cooking meals meant that candidates actually completed both areas. The buying of food appeared to be stronger than the cooking 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 saving money when buying or cooking foods. Marks from the middle mark bands for example band 2 and 3 were awarded when candidates had identified ways to save money and then had included qualifying points in relation to the buying 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 saving money when buying and cooking foods.

**Q.5 (a) (i)** Many candidates were able to gain one mark by correctly naming semi skimmed or skimmed milk as a low-fat milk. Almond milk or soya milk were popular responses for a processed milk. Some candidates recorded the answers the wrong way round naming a processed milk first then a low-fat milk. Some candidates did not access any marks due to listing the different coloured tops of milk rather than the actual name of milk.

**(ii)** This question was well answered and many candidates were able to secure full marks.

**(b)** Many candidates were able to provide a number of reasons why milk is pasteurised, but as the stem of the question was state only one mark was available for this part. When explaining the process of pasteurisation many candidates gained marks by stating that milk is heated to a high temperature but marks were not awarded when boiling was referred to. To be credited with the full 3 marks a temperature needed to be included. Less awareness was shown in relation to the short time of heating and the cooling rapidly stage.

**(c) (i)** Many candidates demonstrated a sound awareness of symptoms of being lactose intolerant with stomach ache, diarrhoea, bloating and feeling sick being the most popular responses. Responses such as going to the toilet or having stomach problems did not access any marks.

**(ii)** Generally, this question was well attempted with many candidates gaining some marks. Candidates were able to identify ingredients to change and what to replace them with. Popular answers included lactose free milk e.g. soya, oat, rice milk. Cheese e.g. vegan cheese and butter with oil being a common suggestion. To gain full marks candidates had to identify the ingredient that required changing and then suggest a suitable replacement. Some candidates incorrectly focussed on the pasta and suggested the changing of it to gluten free pasta which was not awarded any marks.

Candidates struggled with the removal of the cheese as a topping and the suggesting of a suitable alternative topping.

- Q.6**
- (a)**
- (i)** This question was well answered by the majority of candidates, with flour, egg and breadcrumbs being popular responses.
- (ii)**
- (I)** This question was accessible for many candidates. A basic response such as 'crispy and crunchy' gained 1 mark. A more developed response such as the comparison of the crispy outer coating to the soft and tender chicken inside gained 2 marks.
- (II)** Many candidates found explaining how the coating improved the appearance of the chicken goujons easier, with 'golden brown colour' a popular response for 1 mark. A developed response included referring to the golden brown colour as more appetising, eye catching or appealing.
- (iii)** Some candidates referred to deep frying rather than shallow frying for this question however, if the steps to follow they stated were suitable then credit was given. Generally, this was well attempted by many candidates and marks were gained for steps such as: use a small amount of oil, flip or turn goujons over so that they are fully cooked and cook until golden brown.
- (iv)** This question was well answered by many candidates with good knowledge and understanding demonstrated on the storage of raw chicken in the home. To access full marks a fridge or freezer temperature was required.
- Q.7**
- (a)** This question proved to be challenging for many candidates with some candidates leaving the question unanswered. Candidates that were familiar with the term fortification, referred to the adding of nutrients to a food or the replacing of nutrients that have been lost during processing. Many candidates incorrectly referred to the term as making food healthier.
- (b)** Many incorrect examples of fortified foods were stated such as cheese and meat. Candidates were credited for breakfast cereals but not just cereals. Many gained marks by correctly identifying margarine, rice, bread or flour and eggs.
- (c)** Many candidates were able to access some of the marks available for this question.
- (i)** Candidates often used the wording from the stem of the question in their responses for the flavour intensifiers but were able to gain a mark if they clarified it would be a strong flavour or improve the flavour. A stronger taste was also a popular choice of words. Candidates found it difficult to develop their response to gain the full two marks and this is something that should be worked on for future examinations. Candidates that made reference to the flavour intensifiers boosting sales were not awarded marks.



- (ii) Making the colour 'appealing' was a common response to this question with attractive and appetising being other key terms. Some candidates were able to further develop their response by including a reference to the red/pink colour of the yoghurt compared to the pale or bland white colour prior to adding a colouring.

**Q.8** This question was accessed by candidates of all abilities with at least 1-3 marks being gained by lower level candidates. There were many well structured essays which focussed on both aspects of the question, the health issues associated with a diet high in saturated fat and how to prevent, which showed a big improvement on previous years. Some candidates unfortunately did not progress up the mark bands due to not going into detail about the different health issues they had stated in their response, and as the stem of the question uses the terms 'evaluate' and 'discuss' a description and explanation of relevant points is required. Common health issues highlighted included CHD, with better responses also including a reference to high cholesterol. Obesity was regularly mentioned by many candidates with most descriptions stating it was being very overweight. When diabetes type 2 had been linked to obesity credit was given. Some candidates are still not including the type of diabetes when discussing this health issues therefore marks are not awarded. Tooth decay was a common problem brought up by many candidates of all abilities which did not lead to any crediting of marks.

How to prevent was the weaker aspect of this question and many candidates could identify foods that were high in saturated fat but could not always suggest alternatives or replacement foods to consume to decrease an intake of saturated fat. Exercise or exercise more, was often mentioned in candidate's responses as well as NHS guidelines and the Eatwell guide but once again these was not always linked back to health issues or a diet high in saturated fat.

Many candidates were assessed this series using nonstandard scripts e.g. Modified Language, Large print etc. and whilst these are a 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.

## Component 2 Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action

### Overview of the Component

#### Assessment 1

AOs assessed: AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation AO4 Analyse and evaluate different aspects of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation, including food made by themselves and others.

The two tasks set by EDUQAS were:

Task A: Sugar is one ingredient used to add to the sensory characteristics of biscuits. Investigate the working characteristics and the functional and chemical properties of a range of sugars used when making biscuits.

Task B: Eggs are one of the main ingredients when making meringues. Investigate the working characteristics and the functional and chemical properties of eggs or other ingredients when making meringues.

Candidates are expected to follow the advisory guidelines on the length of the written report, which is 1500-2000 words. This includes all text and text boxes.

**The outcomes of the assessment was comparable to last year. The majority of centres guided candidates well.** 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.

#### Assessment 2

AOs assessed – AO3 Plan, prepare, cook and present dishes, combining appropriate techniques and AO4 Analyse and evaluate different aspects of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation, including food made by themselves and others.

The two tasks set by Eduqas were:

Task A We are advised to increase the amount of dietary fibre (NSP) we have in our diet. Research, prepare and cook 3 dishes (and accompaniments, if appropriate) that showcase your technical skills and demonstrate how dietary fibre (NSP) intake can be increased in a modern daily diet.

Task B Many international hotels serve breakfast throughout the morning. The food served is usually very varied and reflects many different cultures. Research, prepare and cook 3 dishes (and accompaniments, if appropriate) that showcase your technical skills and would meet the requirements of a modern, international breakfast menu.

The outcomes of this assessment, on the whole, was similar to last year. Some centres had clearly acted on moderator feedback from 2023 to make adjustments according to the specification and assessment criteria. Section B was, for some centres still displayed evidence of overmarking.

## **Tasks**

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

#### **Assessment 1**

**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 the Biscuit task. Both tasks were generally well-researched, with many candidates including in depth research about the function of ingredients in biscuits and eggs in meringues. Some provided a comparison of existing biscuits.

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 meringue task, experimental work could have involved using different ingredients, such as varying the amount of fat added to egg white to assess the effect on the stability of the foam, different types of egg, alternatives to egg e.g. Aquafaba. Most testing had evidence of star profiles and peer assessment was present but more is needed to justify awarding marks from the top band in this section.

Regarding the Biscuit task, candidates also explored using different ingredients and experimenting with ingredient ratios. When analysing results, many compared using sensory analysis, for example biscuit colours using a Munsell Chart, star profiles, and the 'snap' test.

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 Meringue task, photographs could have depicted the different stages of the investigation, the mixture before and after being whisked and cooked. 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.

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.

For the Meringue task, candidates could have discussed several scientific principles that may have influenced the outcome. The affect of agitation of egg whites (denaturation and coagulation), the affect of any fat when whisking the egg whites, the amount of sugar and the stability of the meringue.

Regarding the Biscuit task, candidates had numerous opportunities to discuss the scientific principles behind the cooking process. The colour of the biscuit through not only the type of flour (e.g., wholemeal flour) but also through the dextrinisation while cooking.

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.

## Assessment 2

**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 hotel/restaurant visits, 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. 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 as the candidates can complete the practical in the 3-hour time limit. The use of colour coding for the different dishes, or different columns 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 is not mandatory but it does facilitate 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.

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