

NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Food and Cookery (601/4533/X)

Assessment window: March 2017

This report contains general information from the Chief Examiner. The aim is to point out the positives and negatives of the scripts in the assessment window to guide you to areas that are doing well and not so well.

Key points:

- administering the external assessment
- standard of learner work
- referencing of external assessment tasks
- evidence creation
- interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria
- planning in the external assessment.

It's important to note that learners shouldn't sit the external assessment until they've taken part in the relevant teaching of the unit to ensure they are well prepared for the external assessment.

Administering the external assessment

The external assessment must be independent from the teaching of the unit. Work completed during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Any stimulus materials used by the centre during the teaching of the unit cannot be used in the external assessment. Learners must complete all of the tasks independently.

The completion of the timed tasks must be invigilated and sat in accordance with the [Regulations for the Conduct of External Assessment - V Certs.](#)

Standard of learner work

The quality and standard of the work was generally consistent with previous examination series, with a range of outcomes seen across the distinction, merit, pass and NYA grading criteria in this fourth assessment window. There has been some outstanding level 2 responses demonstrating effective teaching and learning at this level with an excellent understanding of the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Food and Cookery (601/4533/X). Where learners were well prepared for Unit 3, they could apply their knowledge and understanding to scenarios and make the links between the tasks work well. The variety of questions gave scope for support, stretch and challenge, with effective differentiation across the ability spectrum.

However there have also been some weak responses highlighting that some learners would be better placed accessing the Level 1 course.

Centres are reminded that they “are responsible for ensuring that this qualification is appropriate for the age and ability of learners. They need to make sure that learners can fulfill the requirements of the assessment criteria of this qualification”, as per the NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Food and Cookery (601/4533/X) qualification specification. Most learners are attempting every question and higher performing learners are using the grading criteria to access the grade descriptors for higher levels.

Any unanswered assessment criteria (AC) will result in a Not Yet Achieved for that assessment criteria and an over all Not Yet Achieved for the unit.

Some learners in this assessment window answered the questions generically.

At level 2 learners must be able to demonstrate skills such as Describe, Explain, Evaluate and Compare as per the assessment criteria.

There was a range of work seen where learners had received reasonable adjustments mainly focused on the need for additional time and a reader or scribe all within the guidance agreed for the qualification. Some examples of these were learners at centres who have problems with their writing quality and speed who would benefit from more time to be able to make the writing legible without compromising on the quality. Centres must be reminded to take full advantage of the available support for learners when this is the learner’s normal way of working. All reasonable adjustments need to be requested in advance of the external assessment.

Regrettably, it was evident again that some learners were under prepared for the external assessment as the quality of their answers did not reflect a secure understanding of the range, which is published in the NCFE specification. Where learners could apply their knowledge and understanding to the assessment criteria, and write coherently with depth and detail, they were rewarded with success.

Evidently, some Level 1 learners had been entered for the Level 2 paper, and as a result were unable to access the pass criteria producing simplistic answers. It is vital that centres are reminded of the importance of recruiting learners with integrity and at the right level for the qualification. Clearly this is in the interest of the learners and the realistic nature of their potential achievement. Centres should use the exemplar materials available on the website to ensure that they are as prepared as possible.

Teachers must ensure that learners understand what they need to produce to meet criteria well and should also structure teaching so that the externally assessed unit comes at an appropriate time in the course, so that learners benefit from the holistic nature of all taught units.

Referencing of external assessment tasks

The assessment criteria are clearly visible for each task and learners must be encouraged to refer to the grading criteria throughout the assessment to ensure that their answer fully meets this. This is especially important for learners hoping to achieve Merit and Distinction grades. Learners should use the answer booklet, using the space provided, to answer questions. Where answers are typed or additional pages included, the learners name must be clearly visible and it must be clear which task the answer refers to.

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Evidence creation

This qualification is aimed at 14-16 year olds studying their Key Stage 4 curriculum and interested in any of the diet, nutrition and health contexts such as lifestyle, provenance and cookery. The qualification focuses on an applied study of the food and cookery sector and learners will gain a broad knowledge and understanding of working in the sector. The qualifications have been designed to sit alongside the requirements of core GCSE subjects. They are appropriate for learners who are motivated and challenged by learning through hands-on experiences and through content, which is concrete and related directly to those experiences.

The Level 2 qualification is appropriate for learners who are looking to develop a significant core of knowledge and understanding and apply that knowledge in preparing, planning and developing a food and cookery programme. Successful completion of this qualification will enable learners to progress to Level 3 qualifications in related subjects. The knowledge and

skills gained will provide an introduction o those required for careers in the food and nutrition industry.

For this paper there was a very broad range of evidence offered. The evidence was clearly referenced and identifiable to the relevant assessment criteria and centres had clearly been effective in teaching and learning for the unit.

Interpretation of the tasks and associated assessment criteria

Task 1

A.C 1.1 Explain what is meant by a balanced diet.

There were many good references to nutrition, eatwell guide and the need for the correct proportion of nutrients to be available in a healthy balanced diet. Links to 'how and why', were often more limited in the weaker responses, and for some candidates they were unable to provide a coherent answer. References to accurate daily requirements for water and dietary fibre were credited, and additionally the effects these have on ensuring a healthy balanced diet. Named nutrients and their functions were often referenced with excellent subject knowledge, and this progression of understanding was evident across the task.

A.C 1.2 Describe the nutrients that make up a balanced diet.

This was generally answered with good subject knowledge, but where candidates misread the question and focused purely on food groups, they were unable to access the AC as there was no reference to named nutrients, their function or source in the tabulated format. There is still considerable confusion between nutrients and food groups. Many learners continue to use these terms interchangeably e.g. nutrients such as dairy foods. and showed no knowledge or understanding that whilst dairy foods are high in fat most also provide protein, vitamin D and calcium. Macro and micro nutrients are referenced in the range of subject knowledge, and for some learners this presented some difficulty as they had limited knowledge of these terms. More able learners were able to self select nutrients accurately and provide a clear and coherent description of functions, sources and deficiencies with impressive knowledge of nutrition.

Task 2

A.C 1.3 Explain nutrient requirements for different groups of people

This assessment criterion focuses on the learner's ability to explain. It's recommended that learners are taught the full range, with specific focus on the nutritional needs for different groups of people. Learners should be aware of both the limitations of specific diets, as well as positive ways of meal planning, to ensure the nutritional status is maintained. Generally the understanding of lactose intolerance, symptoms and meal planning issues was strong and learners were able to provide articulate, well thought out answers. Knowledge of the excess and deficiencies over time of nutrients are needed within the range and learners need to be able to apply these to the given scenario/context of the question. For distinction, students need to comprehensively explain and apply their subject knowledge, and this should include examples and references to named nutrient function, source, deficiencies and excesses.

Task 3

A.C 1.5 Explain how nutritional information on food labels can inform healthy eating

Most learners were able to identify the labelling system and how this informs healthy eating. Superficial references to nutritional data or eating more/less of these foods limited the learners ability to access the AC. In the most articulate answers, learners were able to show critical judgment of the data and its use for healthy eating linked to allergens, and they were rewarded with distinction for this AC.

Task 4

A.C 1.4 Explain healthy eating advice

For this assessment criterion, learners must be able to make links and connections between a meal diary and the health of an individual. To do this, candidates should be taught to apply their subject knowledge to different contexts of meal planning, identifying cause and effect of excess or insufficient nutrients, linked to healthy eating, which is identified in the range on page 48 of the specification.

A.C 1.6 Assess a food diary and make recommendations

For this assessment criterion, learners must be able to assess and make recommendations. Most learners have been able to give one or two recommendations; however it is the quality of the recommendations and the learners' ability to apply this to the meal diary that determines the higher grades. The impact of the recommendations were generally much improved from the previous exam series, and there was some very high level answers linked to dietary related medical conditions and why they could be potentially harmful.

Task 5, A.C 2.1 Assess a recipe in terms of its contribution to healthy eating

For this assessment criterion, learners must be able to assess a recipe and its contribution to healthy eating. This could include any factors from the range (cooking methods, ingredients, portion control, size, serving suggestions or cost). Annotated comments on the recipe were very helpful to learners and many were able to show much critical understanding. Most learners have been able to give many recommendations; however it is the quality of the recommendations and the learners ability to apply this to the recipe that determines the higher grades.

A.C 2.2 Explain how the recipe could be changed to make the finished dish healthier

Learners could demonstrate some interesting recipe adaption ideas, which included references to lowering the fat, sugar and salt content, increasing the fibre content, promoting 5 a day concept and making changes to cooking and preparation methods. Access to the distinction needed to comprehensively explain and all encompassing. Very low level answers tended to dwell on the removal of ingredients, with no named replacement eg remove the fat, or ambiguous statements about low fat butter.

A.C 2.3 Describe other factors that could affect the finished dish

There were a range of answers given to this question from NYA to distinction, and the question faired better for learners where they could comment on taste, texture, moisture, appeal, appearance. Once again, many learners repeated the answers in AC2.2, or in deed merely listed the factors identified in the range with no further discussion linked to how or why. This is one area of the unit that requires thoughtful planning when teaching the unit, and making the link to practical work in units 1,2 and 4. Functions of ingredients and the working characteristics of primary foods are fundamental tot this AC, and it would be beneficial to centres to build this into their schemes of learning across the practical work. Regrettably, the answers provided by learners in this AC were often the limiting factor in greater achievement for learners. It would greatly benefit learners if the information within the subject 'range' for this AC was used during teaching and learning activities.

Planning in the external assessment

Centres are reminded to give due attention to the assessment windows of the external assessment. It's not advisable for learners to sit the external assessment early in their programme. It is far more appropriate to enter learners once they have taken part in the relevant teaching to ensure they are well prepared. Centres would be in a better position to prepare their learners for the external assessment following the support of an external moderation visit for the internally assessed units.

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