

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paper 6065/11 Theory 11
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Key messages

Candidates should be directed to read each question carefully and make sure they answer what is being asked. Introductory words and sentences should be used to establish the type of information required in the response.

Centres need to prepare candidates by ensuring that they have a full understanding of the requirements of different command words: name, state, give, identify, describe, discuss and explain. Often, candidates had difficulty in achieving the full marks for questions asking for an explanation, because answers were not supported with relevant examples or reasoning.

Candidates would benefit from further study in the areas of digestion, energy balance, types and functions of ingredients in mixtures and types of additives, as many candidates found questions on these topics challenging.

General comments

Candidates achieved varying degrees of success with some scripts showing noticeably good levels of knowledge and understanding. Reasons, examples and discussion were given where appropriate for stronger candidates. Weaker candidates showed they were able to recall basic facts but did not give required explanations or examples.

It is important that comprehension of technical words related to Food and Nutrition such as function, symptom, source and nutritional are reinforced so that candidates are not disadvantaged when understanding what is required from questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

The majority of candidates were able to correctly define the term balanced diet.

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates provided a response for this question but it proved to be challenging. Candidates either provided an incorrect deficiency disease such as beriberi, rickets and pellagra or just gave anaemia.
- (b) When answered correctly the most popular responses were eggs, milk and cheese, very rarely were other responses from the mark scheme seen. Sometimes candidates referred to soya milk, soya beans, tofu and breakfast cereals but did not include fortified in their responses.

Question 3

- (a) **The** majority of candidates achieved the credit available by correctly naming a fruit or vegetable that contained fructose. The term fruit or vegetables was not creditworthy as the question asked for a name not a type.
- (b) Most candidates were able to gain credit by correctly naming milk or any food produced from milk.
- (c) Many candidates showed good knowledge of the effects of dry heat on sugar with some good descriptors given. When talking about burning or blackening of sugar it was necessary for candidates to refer to prolonged heating causing this effect.

Question 4

Many candidates were able to provide at least two correct sources of beta-carotene. As the question asked for different food sources candidates who named more than one green leafy vegetable or pepper were not given credit. Some candidates incorrectly named the sources of beta-carotene as meat, fish, milk and cheese.

Question 5

- (a) A good proportion of candidates correctly stated the function of maltase and achieved full credit.
- (b) Candidates found this question challenging. The most frequent incorrect responses included the stomach and mouth.

Question 6

- (a) Many candidates achieved full credit for this question showing their knowledge of nutrients that provide energy.
- (b) (i) Only a few correct responses were seen for this question on energy balance.
(ii) Many candidates found this question challenging and very few candidates gained credit.
- (c) The majority of candidates gained credit for this question with a range of responses from the mark scheme seen. When incorrectly answered candidates had referenced kilograms or grams.
- (d) This question was well answered with candidates frequently achieving three or four marks. A range of responses from the mark scheme were seen.

Question 7

Many candidates were able to gain credit for their knowledge of iodide preventing goitre and occasionally thyroxine was mentioned. For some candidates the functions of iron were incorrectly given.

Question 8

- (a) The majority of candidates achieved at least partial credit by correctly naming different water-soluble vitamins.
- (b) Many candidates achieved full credit for this question with a range of answers from the mark scheme being seen.

Section B

Question 9

- (a) Many candidates found this question challenging. There was very little reference to the low gluten content of plain flour playing a role in the short crumb of the pastry. Many candidates incorrectly stated that plain flour has a high gluten content to allow the dough to be stretchy. Where a correct function was mentioned, such as plain flour having no raising agent, it was often not backed up with an explanation as to why this was necessary.
- (b) Many candidates found this question difficult. Candidates usually identified fat adding flavour or colour to the pastry for partial credit but omitted to name the type of fat used for this function and did not demonstrate an awareness of other functions of different fats used in shortcrust pastry. Very few other responses from the mark scheme were seen. A few candidates had responses that referred to flaky or puff pastry.
- (c) (i) This question about faults in shortcrust pastry saw many candidates achieve at least partial credit. Some candidates seemed to try and address all possibilities by providing answers that gave both too much fat or flour and too little fat or flour.
- (ii) This question about faults in shortcrust pastry saw many candidates achieve at least partial credit. Stronger candidates referenced overhanding when rubbing-in or rolling out as well as the over or under addition of particular ingredients.
- (d) Many candidates correctly identified three seeds that could be used to flavour shortcrust pastry with the most popular responses being sunflower, chia, sesame, poppy and pumpkin. Some incorrect responses were different nuts as well as spices and herbs.

Question 10

- (a) Many candidates were able to achieve at least partial credit for this question showing good knowledge of dishes that show the function of eggs in coating and aeration.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to achieve the full credit awarded for this question. Popular responses were binding, emulsification and glazing.

Question 11

- (a) Many candidates achieved partial credit for this question as they indicated that microorganisms would be dormant or inactive at low temperatures. Some candidates incorrectly gave the temperature for a refrigerator and very few referenced the correct temperature of a freezer. A few candidates incorrectly indicated microorganisms and enzymes would be killed.
- (b) Very few candidates gained full credit for this question. Incorrect answers stated that the skin will protect the inside so tomato will not freeze, the skin is hard, the liquid inside the tomato will still cause the bacteria to grow or the tomato is too big to freeze. Some candidates gained credit by referring to the fact that the tomato would become soft and soggy when defrosted or that it had a high-water content or cells would be damaged by formation of ice crystals.
- (c) Many candidates demonstrated their knowledge of suitable preservation methods and gained full credit.

Question 12

Very few candidates achieved highly for this question. Many candidates did not demonstrate knowledge around the benefits of emulsifiers in convenience foods. Some candidates did identify that the shelf life would be improved or that emulsifiers would prevent the separation of oil and water. Some candidates incorrectly indicated the benefits of convenience foods to the consumer.

Question 13

- (a) Many candidates were able to gain credit for this question by showing their understanding of the benefits to the consumer of the manufacturer's contact details on a food label.
- (b) Many candidates achieved at least partial credit by listing details as seen on the mark scheme. Some candidates repeated information such as the date element giving use-by and best-before or said nutrients list instead of ingredients list.
- (c) Many candidates found this question challenging. Some responses were unclear and it was not evident what tamper proof process was being referred to.

Section C

The questions in this section are worth fifteen marks and candidates are expected to answer in an essay style, using correct terminology and specialist language where appropriate.

It is essential that when answering questions of this nature candidates read the requirements of the question carefully to give a balanced response that addresses the areas of the question under consideration.

Neither of the questions were more popular than the other.

Question 14

It was expected that nutrients contained in fruit and vegetables would be identified and the function of each nutrient would then be commented upon. Weaker candidates often only mentioned the benefits of eating fruit and vegetables without naming nutrients which provided those benefits. Stronger candidates named specific nutrients and discussed various functions of the nutrient, with some providing more depth of knowledge than others.

Not all candidates responded to the second part of the question in as great a detail. Some candidates referred to the different colours, flavours and textures of fruit and vegetables, and other points from the mark scheme, but there was limited extended discussion or examples around these points provided.

Question 15

Candidates were expected to cover all areas of the question and include discussion throughout where appropriate. Many responses from candidates did not include reasons or explanations for statements made. Some candidates gave detailed descriptions of buying a live chicken and what to do with it, which was not asked for. Many candidates incorrectly referenced storing the chicken in the freezer and thawing for use the next day. Many candidates were able to state several ways of tenderising the chicken but did not say how the connective tissue and muscle fibres were affected by the methods given. Many candidates were aware of the changes that take place in chicken when it is cooked and gave good descriptions of these changes.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paper 6065/12 Theory 12
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Key messages

There was an increase this year in the number of candidates leaving questions completely blank and those giving incomplete answers.

Candidates should be directed to read each question carefully and make sure they answer what is being asked. Introductory words and sentences should be used to establish the type of information required in the response.

Centres need to prepare candidates by ensuring that they have a full understanding of the requirements of different command words: name, state, give, identify, describe, discuss and explain. Often, candidates had difficulty in achieving the full marks for questions asking for an explanation, because answers were not supported with relevant examples or reasoning.

Candidates would benefit from further study in the areas of digestion and NSP as many candidates found questions on these topics challenging.

General comments

There were several candidates who produced answers of a very good standard, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the subject matter and an ability to apply their knowledge. Reasons, examples and discussion were given where appropriate. Weaker candidates showed they were able to recall basic facts but did not give required explanations or examples.

It is important that comprehension of technical words related to Food and Nutrition such as function, symptom, source and nutritional are reinforced so that candidates are not disadvantaged when understanding what is required from questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Many of the candidates who answered this question were able to correctly name at least one element that occurs in protein molecules. It was clear though that many did not understand the term elements and gave answers with links to protein such as peptides, amino acids and pepsin whilst others provided completely unrelated responses. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (b)(i) Many candidates were able to correctly name either marasmus or kwashiorkor as a disease that results from an insufficient amount of protein. Incorrect answers included diseases such as beriberi or rickets or other incorrect responses including underweight, malnutrition poor growth and famine which are not diseases. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (ii) This was attempted by most candidates and generally answered correctly. Weaker responses listed more than one of the same food types, e.g. meat and chicken or milk and cheese.

- (c) Incorrect responses for this question gave other parts of the digestive system such as mouth, stomach or intestine. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (d) This question was found to be challenging for candidates. Incorrect responses given were faeces, anus and energy. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (e) Most candidates answered this question but the main error was mixing up denaturing with dextrinisation showing candidates were unclear as to which reaction affects which macronutrient.

Question 2

Many candidates showed some knowledge of the functions of calcium with most achieving at least partial credit for stating its use in building and maintaining bones and teeth. Very few gave alternative functions found on the mark scheme.

Question 3

- (a) Very few candidates achieved the full credit available for this question. The most common correct answer was soya bean. Candidates who simply gave fish could not be awarded the mark as the answer required naming the fish as oily or providing a named oily fish. Quite often saturated fats such as ghee, butter or meat were given as an answer, indicative of a misunderstanding of polyunsaturated fats.
- (b) Candidates found this question challenging and common incorrect answers seen were lipase, pancreatic amylase or gastric juice. A high proportion of candidates submitted no answer.

Question 4

Many candidates showed some knowledge of the functions of vitamin E with most achieving at least partial credit, mainly for stating it is an antioxidant or its role in healthy skin. Very few gave alternative functions found on the mark scheme. Several candidates gave imprecise responses such as prevents disease or gives energy which were not credit worthy.

Question 5

- (a) Most candidates achieved at least partial credit by naming different sensory reasons for garnishing savoury dishes. Candidates need to be careful not to repeat an answer by repeating responses e.g. to provide flavour and to provide taste.
- (b) This question was generally answered well and many candidates achieved the full credit. Most popular responses were parsley, eggs, spring onions and tomato flower. Weaker candidates did not name a different garnish but instead named a classification group e.g. herbs or cheese or gave names of three herbs.

Question 6

- (a) Many candidates were able to correctly name a monosaccharide though some confused monosaccharides and disaccharides. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (b) Many candidates were able to correctly name a disaccharide though some confused monosaccharides and disaccharides. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (c) A common error when answering this question was lack of explanation of the function given which led to many candidates not gaining credit. The question introduction stated that sugar helps preserve food by preventing bacterial growth, providing a function of sugar with an explanation of how the function is achieved.

It was expected that candidates would qualify their answers rather than give a one word response. An example of this lack of detail is when candidates stated that sugar gave colour to products but omitted to say how that is achieved or that sugar gave taste but the sensory descriptor of sweetness or sweet taste meant the credit could not be given.

Question 7

- (a) Candidates found this question to be challenging. The most common response from the mark scheme was constipation with very few alternative problems due to a lack of NSP. Incorrect responses frequently seen were fatigue, nausea, dehydration or fatigue.
- (b) It was expected that candidates would show their knowledge of foods high in NSP and suggest different ways to incorporate those foods into family meals to gain full credit. Often, sources of NSP were named but no reference was given as to how to serve in family meals. Many candidates were unable to name food sources but simply stated 'use more foods with high NSP' and so could not gain credit. Credit was not given if snacks were mentioned in the response as they are not a meal.

Section B

Question 8

- (a) Many candidates were able to correctly name baking powder as the chemical raising agent found in self-raising flour. Common incorrect responses frequently seen were bicarbonate of soda, baking soda, yeast and carbon dioxide.
- (b) It was expected that candidates would show their familiarity with how air is mechanically incorporated using the creaming method by referring to sieving flour, creaming fat and sugar or beating eggs. The correct ingredients had to be associated with the method and this is where many candidates were unsuccessful.
- (c) (i) Unfamiliarity with the creaming method led to there being very few correct responses seen for this question. The majority of answers suggested trapping air or introducing air or removing lumps.
(ii) Many candidates understood that a piece of equipment with a 'cutting' edge is needed to fold flour into a mixture. Common incorrect responses were sieve, mixer, wooden spoon and rolling pin.
- (d) Weaker candidates were unable to state that low-fat spread contains a high proportion of water and this impacts on the success of cupcakes by failure to hold sufficient air resulting in a poor textural outcome.
- (e) Many candidates achieved full credit by naming caster and brown sugar as being types of sugar that can be used to make successful cupcakes. Common incorrect responses seen were icing sugar, granulated or white sugar.
- (f) (i) Many candidates correctly answered that the cupcakes would be too sweet, strong candidates were able to correctly identify one more answer from the mark scheme but not many achieved full credit. Very few candidates were able to explain that the structure collapsed and some candidates incorrectly said it would not rise.
(ii) This question was generally quite well answered showing good knowledge of oven temperature, positioning and timing control.
- (g) This question was generally quite well answered showing good knowledge of the functions of an egg. Popular responses included aerates, coagulates, adding colour and flavour.

Question 9

- (a) Candidates found this question challenging. Many were unable to provide a benefit to a consumer simply stating to 'know the weight' or referred to knowing the calories or if the product was too heavy to carry or suitable to take on holiday. Very few considered the advantage to the consumer of being able to compare products to check value for money, appropriate portions for family or adequate weight for recipe requirements.
- (b) Many candidates did not extend their answers so could not gain credit. A common response was 'know where to store the food' which does not demonstrate any understanding of the advantage to a consumer. It was expected answers would include knowing where to store foods safely, correctly or properly to prevent spoilage or maintain keeping quality.

Question 10

Many candidates were able to state a change brought about by cooking food, such as change in texture, flavour or colour but did not explain why or how this happened or give an example. Stronger candidates were able to provide explanations and often gave extended examples. Quite a few candidates gave reasons to cook such as for a hobby, as a job, gaining skills, having fun or saving money by not eating in a restaurant, all of which are not syllabus related responses.

Question 11

- (a) Many candidates were aware that antioxidants help extend shelf life and some referred to prevention of rancidity. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (b) This question was challenging for candidates. Sugar, salt and chemicals were the main incorrect answers seen and quite a few candidates submitted no answer.

Question 12

- (a) This question was generally quite well answered with many candidates achieving at least partial credit. Some candidates gave protein which was already stated in the question. Many candidates gave vitamins and minerals without naming specific ones. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (b) This question was generally quite well answered with many candidates achieving at least partial credit. Quite a few candidates gave types of soya product such as sausages, burgers or chunks so could not gain credit. Quite a few candidates submitted no answer.
- (c) Many candidates achieved partial credit for this question. A common error was listing nutritional benefits of TVP rather than other benefits.

Section C

The questions in this section are worth fifteen marks and candidates are expected to answer in an essay style, using correct terminology and specialist language where appropriate.

It is essential that when answering questions of this nature candidates read the requirements of the question carefully to give a balanced response that addresses the areas of the question under consideration.

Neither of the questions were more popular than the other.

Question 13

The focus of the question was on being economical when shopping for food. Quite a few candidates had done a plan of what to include in their essay and this helped them stay on track. Some candidates did not centre their attention on the economical side of shopping but wrote about how to be economical with food, time and fuel so could not gain credit. Some candidates incorrectly wrote at length about what constitutes a balanced meal. Those candidates that kept to the demands of the question managed to provide some excellent suggestions as to how to be economical, from preparing a shopping list through to taking personal shopping bags and adapting recipes to substitute cheaper ingredients. Candidates who provided ideas and then gave the rationale behind them gained the most credit.

Question 14

The focus of this question was on why people follow a vegetarian lifestyle. Quite a few candidates had done a plan of what to include in their essay and this helped them stay on track. Many candidates spent a lot of time classifying different groups of vegetarians which did not gain credit. Many correctly mentioned religious, health, moral and ethical factors but, in order to achieve credit, candidates needed to be clear in their response stating the factors and then extending the point to explain how this would influence a person to become vegetarian.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Paper 6065/02 Practical Test

Key messages

- The inclusion of clear photographs is essential for moderation. Centres should ensure that all dishes are not obscured by table decorations, labels or coverings so that they are clearly visible. Candidates should not appear in the picture. One small table decoration only is required and dishes should be grouped closely together so that a clear, close-up picture can be taken. Dishes should be uncovered so that a visual assessment can take place. Only one clear, hard copy of the final dishes is required. Centres should not send memory sticks or CDs, as these cannot be viewed by Moderators.
- All centres must complete and include the Practical examiner's report and checklist with the candidates' work. This can be found in the Confidential Instructions document. It includes a record of the dates when the planning and practical tests were carried out, a seating plan and the opportunity for the teacher to report any difficulties that may have occurred during the Practical Test.
- For each examination session centres should download and use the most recent forms. These are available on the Cambridge website with interactive summary mark sheets and working mark sheets that will automatically total the marks and scale correctly. Many centres are using this system effectively now.
- Examiners should refer to the Practical Test Handbook, and the Guidance for skill levels document available online from the School Support hub to ensure that the mark scheme is accurately, rigorously and consistently applied across the cohort. All examiners should refresh their knowledge of the instructions and mark scheme annually. Marks awarded must reflect the comments given on the Examiner marksheets and the annotations on candidates' planning sheets.
- Half marks should not be awarded in the test as this can lead to over-marking. Where marking results in a decimal point, these must be rounded down, not up.
- In large centres, where there are two or more examiners, the work should be standardised and carefully moderated internally before submitting to Cambridge. The sample of candidates' work should be sent to Cambridge, to include the top, middle and bottom marks; with a range in-between that includes work from each examiner and represents all five test questions allocated.
- Work for each candidate should be collated and paper clipped together. It should include a front mark sheet, candidate's time-plan and one photo of all dishes made (please do not include photos of candidates).

General comments

Some centres incorrectly transferred marks from the summary marksheet to the MS1 and these had to be adjusted at moderation. All centres must check that marks have been accurately awarded, correctly added up and scaled and that the mark submitted to Cambridge matches the mark awarded to the candidate. Many centres awarded half marks, which were then adjusted during moderation.

Most examiners provided detailed annotation on the front sheets and within the work. There were several examples of good practice when examiners commented on a) how choice of dishes met the test requirements b) how well the work was planned with reference to dovetailing skills, sequencing skills, use of appropriate methods and accurate detail in the special points column c) the practical and organisational skills demonstrated during the practical test d) the taste/texture and appearance of the final results with reference to the sensory word bank in the Practical Test Handbook. Good practice was also seen when examiners indicated on the work where and how they were allocating marks. For example, on the recipe sheet examiners recorded a mark out of four for each dish chosen as well as a mark out of five for the ingredients listed. Also, time plans were marked using the recommended abbreviations (DT, W, M, SQ etc.). This enables Moderators to give more accurate and consistent advice in the report to centres. It is a requirement of the exam board that all candidates' work must show evidence of marking, with annotation clearly written on the work to evidence how and where marks have been awarded.

Candidates need careful preparation for the practical test and they would benefit from some practice with cooking more than one dish at a time so the skill of dovetailing their work is developed prior to the test.

The most successful centres presented work of a good standard where candidates have been very well supported with well-directed teaching, enabling them to submit interesting and varied work which met the assessment criteria. A significant number of candidates did not complete all five of the dishes they had planned. This impacted their overall marks.

Some candidates need more guidance and practice with menu planning and meeting nutritional needs so that they can accurately answer the demands of the test allocated whilst demonstrating sufficient skills in using a wide range of ingredients, manipulation of various mixtures and different cooking methods that make full and sensible use of the oven, grill and the top of the cooker. This does rely on the expertise of their teachers. Candidates need to be able to apply their theoretical knowledge of nutritional requirements for specific groups and should also ensure they understand of the requirements of a 'balanced meal'. They should be taught how to select suitable dishes for a range of nutritional requirements so that during the planning session, they instinctively know how to plan a suitable balanced meal.

Centres should note that for the purposes of the practical test, a balanced main meal consists of two skilful dishes and at least two suitable accompaniments. The two skilful dishes can either be a starter and a main course, a main course and a dessert or two complementary main dishes that would typically be eaten together in the same meal. Some candidates mistakenly planned two main course dishes that were not complementary to a specific meal and this resulted in menus that were too heavy in carbohydrate and/or protein.

Candidates should also show regard for the 'theme' of the test when planning their final displays; for example, food for a party needs a party table setting, whereas food for a main meal needs a different but appropriate setting, food for a packed meal needs to be served as such and so on. They need to write their choices in order of the test and clearly indicate which dish is for which part of the test. These should then be annotated by the examiner with marks awarded for each choice of dish. All of the planning should be clearly and concisely annotated using the key provided in the handbook. Examiner annotation should be in a different coloured pen so that it stands out from the candidates' work.

Most candidates had made a good effort to display their final dishes attractively. The main issues lie in the interpretation of the test requirements and ensuring the planning is more accurate. Candidates should be encouraged to make more suitable choices which fulfil the test requirements and which demonstrate the use of a range of ingredients, skills and a variety of cooking methods. They need to make skilled and complex dishes which demonstrate their knowledge of consistencies and cooking methods and which require a range of manipulative skills. Candidates who are aiming for high grades should be making their dishes from scratch and keeping the use of convenience foods to a minimum unless the test asks for them. Centres are reminded that drinks should not be made, unless specifically required and cannot be awarded any marks in the test.

From the photographs included, it was pleasing to see many wonderful examples of colourful arrays of food with appropriately dressed tables and place setting for meals or other events. All candidates do need to consider what the final overall presentation would look like and plan to make colourful dishes or use suitable and imaginative garnishes. Each dish should be clearly labelled so that the name of the dish can be seen in the photograph, without obscuring the food. One small table decoration only is required, and dishes should be grouped together so that they, along with their labels, can be seen clearly. Moderators do not need to see candidates, their food room or great expanses of table area.

Good practice was seen in centres where candidates listed their dishes clearly for all parts of the question and indicated which dishes include particular ingredients, equipment or methods required by the question. Examiners are reminded to indicate on the choices sheet how many marks have been awarded for each individual dish with justification given on the mark sheet. In the main, marks for choices were awarded accurately and fairly, with some exceptions. If a dish is awarded four marks for choices, it should be marked out of seven for results; conversely any dish with marks awarded a maximum of three in choices for low skill level should then be marked out of maximum five for results.

Planning should include brief but accurate details of preparation and cooking methods, cooking times and oven temperatures. Candidates should indicate in the special points column how they will test that each item of food or recipe is cooked – for example they should state that a sponge cake would be baked until 'golden brown and springy to touch', pasta 'cooked until al dente'. There were many good examples of 'dovetailing'.

This is a complex skill that allows candidates to show how, while one dish is cooking, another is being prepared or decorated. Candidates should use dovetailing to demonstrate the efficient use of time and to allow them to make dishes of a higher skill level within the time allowed; and where dovetailing is not evident, the maximum marks available for the time plan are five. Time left at the end of a plan indicates a lack of skill in the dishes chosen or errors in timing for other processes. Some of the plans were written over too many pages. The maximum should be two and any extras should mean that marks are adjusted as it is an indication of too much detail being put into the time plans. Time plans should indicate sufficient work to fill 150 minutes; no less and no more.

The marks for the method of working and the final results sections were often a little generous considering the number of incorrect or low skill dishes, or dishes that were not produced at all. Where this is the case the total number of marks in each section should be reduced. As a general rule, if a candidate chooses five dishes but only makes three in the practical examination they can only be marked out of 33 within method of working (eleven marks per dish or per two accompaniments). Where dishes chosen are simple and do not require a lot of manipulative skills or knowledge of consistencies – marks should be reduced in the method section. In results, incorrect dishes should be awarded a maximum of three and a half marks and for low skill dishes four or five marks maximum should be awarded, depending on the dish.

Where candidates fail to make or serve a planned dish, marks for method of working as well as serving and appearance must also be reduced – marks cannot be transferred to other dishes.

Centres are reminded to please download and use the most recent forms. These are available on the Cambridge website with interactive summary mark sheets and working mark sheets that will automatically total the marks and scale correctly.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Part (a) required a balanced meal for two people with type 2 diabetes. Dishes needed to be low in fat, starch and sugar as well as containing plenty of NSP dietary fibre. Some candidates with this question were able to demonstrate their understanding of the dietary needs of individuals who have type 2 diabetes. The dishes chosen were starch based which in some cases used wholegrains such as brown rice. Popular dishes were vegetable curry, stir fried rice with chicken and fish pie. Many candidates chose two suitable accompaniments and created a well-balanced meal. The best candidates avoided sweet dishes such as puddings and chose to make starters such as vegetable soup instead.

Part (b) required a cake using the whisking method and a dish using potatoes. Good examples of the whisking method cakes were seen where eggs and sugar are whisked until thick and creamy, followed by dry ingredients being carefully folded in. A creaming method recipe that is mixed with an electric mixer is not suitable for this task. The potato dish needed to be more complex than a simple accompaniment to gain higher marks. The best candidates chose a main dish using potatoes (such fish cakes, shepherd's pie or fish pie using mashed potato). Some candidates made mashed potato which is an accompaniment, not a skilful dish.

Question 2

This was a popular question, where three dishes using specified methods were required. Many candidates are familiar and skilled with deep fat frying dishes such as doughnuts, battered fish or crumbed and fried chicken. Good practice was seen where candidates made a sauce, dip or side dish to accompany these. Caramel custard was often chosen to show steaming, which is correct but not the highest of skill level. Several good, steamed sponge puddings with custard were produced. For stewing, a dish that required simmering for a reasonable length of time was also acceptable, such as ragu sauces for pasta bolognaise or curries. Dishes chosen for grilling, often tended to be less skilful, such as simple grilled meats or fish. The skills for these can be elevated with sauces, dips or side dishes to accompany them.

For part (b), the cold sweet dish was often a cheesecake or a baked cake of some type. Scones were either sweet or savoury.

Candidates should always aim for a balanced menu that includes more savoury than sweet dishes.

Question 3

This was another popular question where five party dishes for teenagers were required. Candidates could choose to serve hot or cold dishes. At least three savoury dishes were required, plus a cake made by the creaming method.

Dishes for a party theme test should complement each other. Hot dishes can be served, unless the test specifies cold dishes. Candidates need to give careful consideration to the final collection of dishes, so that they are not making a random selection of their favourite dishes.

Candidates need to consider the scenario of a party – guests would usually take a small portion of several different dishes onto their plate at once. It is a very social occasion, so they may be moving around and chatting while they graze and may want to visit the buffet table more than once. This means that food should be easy to serve in small portions, easy to balance on a plate, easy to eat, and moreish. Finger foods are ideal, but not essential, unless the test specifies this.

Some candidates produced a skilfully decorated cake to show their understanding of the party theme. Also, there was evidence of some well-arranged and thoughtfully presented tables suitable for the theme of a party.

Candidates should not have chosen more than two sweet dishes. Very few candidates showed their awareness of the need for the dishes to be balanced (both nutritionally and in appearance/texture) as there were very few vegetables or salads chosen.

Question 4

This question was popular. Part **(a)** required a balanced meal for manual workers. The strongest candidates took the opportunity to plan a substantial meal to meet the needs of this group. However, some menus did not increase the calorie content and so were not accurately planned. In some cases, the choices were quite low in calories, such as steamed fish or vegetable stir fry.

Part **(b)** required one savoury and one sweet dish to use for a cold packed meal. Popular dishes included sausage rolls, pizza and cupcakes. However, some candidates did not understand the question and chose dishes that could not be eaten cold or transported easily such as spaghetti Bolognese.

Question 5

Most candidates recognised the dietary requirements of a vegetarian. However, occasionally, a candidate incorrectly added chicken stock, gelatin or fish sauce to a recipe and this often was not noticed by examiners. Recipes must be carefully checked for suitable ingredients as well as appropriate quantities. There were good examples of complementary or alternative proteins being used; however, a lot of menus relied on cheese-based dishes to meet the protein requirements. More imaginative menus included pulses, nuts, alternative proteins, such as TVP and the skilful use of eggs.

There were good examples of chocolate cakes made for part **(b)**, and these were often skilfully decorated with ganache, buttercream or piped whipped cream. Cakes that have only a few slices of strawberry on them or are simply dusted with icing sugar are not skilfully decorated and cannot gain the highest marks throughout the test.

Question 6

This popular question required five skilful dishes, each to show the use of a different main ingredient. For this test the ingredient needed to be an integral part of the dish and not merely a garnish. Generally, dishes were well-chosen demonstrating suitable levels of skills and accurate use of the ingredients listed. Most candidates identified the ingredient for each dish chosen on their recipe sheet. This is good practice and essential for moderation to be accurate and consistent.

Wholewheat flour was often chosen, but few candidates used this in their dishes and examiners did not always observe this. Wholewheat (or wholegrain) refers to flour that has been produced by milling the whole of the bran, endosperm and the wheatgerm. Plain white flour, all-purpose flour or cake flour is a different product.

Popular choices were spinach quiche and vegetables au gratin (green leafy vegetable), pizza and quiche (cheese), sponge pudding and cup-cakes (lemon), spaghetti Bolognese (red meat), soya Bolognese or stir fry (soya), carrot cake and pizza (wholemeal flour).

In some cases, candidates chose a simple salad for the dish using a green leafy vegetable and this is low skill. Some candidates used cheese in two or more of their chosen dishes, when the question asked for a different main ingredient to be used in each dish.

Question 7

The strongest candidates identified the equipment used for each chosen dish on their recipe sheet and then went on to use it skilfully. This is good practice and essential for moderation to be accurate and consistent.

Often neither candidates or examiners identified which piece of equipment was being used, so Moderators had to make their own judgments. In some cases, candidates specified a piece of equipment to be used, but then did not use it in their test, for example piping bag or saucepan. Where microwave is chosen, it is expected that the candidate will show skilful use of the equipment, and not only use it to heat water or melt butter. Please note that drinks or smoothies to show use of a food processor are not acceptable, as they are not a skilled dish.

For this type of question, examiners must check carefully that the planned use of any specified equipment is appropriate; and they also need to check that it is used in the time plan and in the practical test itself, as this is where the challenge of the question lies.

Question 8

Few candidates were able to demonstrate a good knowledge of sources of vitamin A for this question. Most candidates relied on a small amount of carrot in a dish, or dairy foods. Dishes containing offal or oily fish were not observed.

Part **(b)** was answered more successfully. Popular dishes that used flaky pastry were sausage rolls or tuna envelopes. Examiners do need to check that candidates choose the correct recipe and method for flaky pastry. In some cases, the ingredients listed were more suitable for shortcrust pastry (half quantity of fat to flour) and in the time plan the method was not clear apart from stating 'rub fat into flour'.

Good examples of the melting method being used were seen for ginger cakes, ginger or oatly biscuits or gingerbread. Melting method refers to fat, sugar and syrup being gently warmed to melt and combine followed by the addition of dry ingredients. Chocolate brownies are also acceptable for this task.