GRINDS 360°

HOME ECONOMICS – EXAM ADVICE

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Layout of Home Economics Exam – Leaving Certificate 2025

Written Exam = 80% L.C grade

SECTION A	SECTION B	SECTION C
60 marks	180 marks	80 marks
15% L.C grade	45% L.C grade	20% L.C grade
- There are 14 SHORT QUESTIONS - Answer 10 out of 14 - Questions 1-9 will be on topics from FOOD STUDIES - Questions 10-14 will be on Home Management topics ▪ Textiles ▪ Consumer studies ▪ Resource management ▪ Finance/housing ▪ Household technology - 6 marks each	- Question 1. B (OBLIGATORY) 80 marks - Analyse table/ chart - Nutrient/ food studies - "dodgy" 20. - Answer TWO out of FOUR questions (50 marks each) Question 2 - Food Studies Question 3 – Food Studies Question 4 – Home management Question 5 – Sociology (core)	Choose ONE question out of FOUR questions. Note: students MUST prepare their chose question BEFORE the exam. Elective 1 (Home design management) Elective 2 (Textiles) Elective 3 (Social studies) Question 4 (Core) (Topics from food studies, Home management, Sociology (CORE))

Time Plan - Leaving Cert Home Economics

2.00pm – 4.30pm (150 mins)

2.00 – 2.05pm	5 minutes	- Put a line through three elective questions on Section C that you are NOT going to answer. - Read over the paper quickly. - Choose the TWO 50 mark questions on Section B you will answer. - Choose (b) OR (c) on your chosen elective question. - Work out marking schemes. - NB – Make sure you will be able to answer all parts of chosen questions.
2.05 – 2.45pm	40 minutes (spend 15 minutes maximum on analysis of table/chart)	Answer Question 1 Section B (OBLIGATORY QUESTION)

2.45 – 3.08pm	23 minutes	Answer the FIRST 50 mark question on Section B.
3.08 – 3.30pm	22 minutes	Answer the SECOND 50 mark question on Section B
3.30 - 4.05pm	35 minutes	Answer chosen ELECTIVE question on Section C
4.05 – 4.25pm	20 minutes	Answer TEN short questions on Section A
4.25 – 4.30pm	5 minutes	Read back over paper to ensure ALL parts of every question are answered. - Underline key sentences
TOTAL	150 minutes	

NOTE

- The above is a SUGGESTED time plan for the Home Economics Leaving cert exam in June 2025.
- It is important to adhere to a STRICT time plan when sitting your Mock exams in February 2025so you know exactly what will work for you in June 2025.
- Answer short questions as if you are under pressure for time you only need to "fill in the gaps" unlike answering long questions where you need to be careful about structure and layout which takes up more time.
- ALWAYS answer the most difficult part of an exam first because you can write about content you are familiar with more quickly.
- The above plan has been tried and tested by students and has worked, however it is up to you to make sure you have a plan that works for you in June 2025.
- PLEASE do not come out of the exam and say "I wish I had more time", you know the allocated time is 150 minutes therefore use this resource wisely and efficiently.

General Advice for the Home Economics (scientific and social) Exam

- Read each question very carefully to ensure you understand what is being asked.
- Use a fluorescent marker (yellow) to highlight the key terms on a question and to highlight the number of marks allocated for the question.

EXAMPLE 1

L.C. 2024

Question 4 – Section B

(a) Analyse the changes in consumer shopping patterns over the last decade (20 marks)

(b) Name and evaluate two different methods of payment are used by consumers to pay for in-store purchases (18 marks)

(c) Describe the protection provided to the consumer by the Consumer Protection Act 2007 (12 marks)

- Work out a possible marking scheme

L.C. 2024

Question 4 – Section B

(a) 5 points @ 4 marks each

(b) 9mk + 9mk (3 @ 3mks)

Name = 3 marks

Evaluate = 6 marks = 2 @ 3mk

(c) 4 @ 3 marks (officially this was 3 points @ 4 marks but ALWAYS err on the side of caution)

- ALWAYS ANSWER IN POINT FORMAT NEVER WRITE IN ESSAY STYLE

- Develop the points according to the number of marks allocated to each point.

- REMEMBER – 4 marks = 1% of Leaving Cert grade in Home Economics.

- Back up answers with specific examples that are modern/practical and up to date.

- Practice answering homework questions from past Leaving cert exam questions in "real time" [see time plan for 2025]:
  There is no point in getting full marks on a homework question or class test question if it takes you a lot longer to answer than the time allocated to answering questions on the exam. Stick to the exam time plan.

- You must ONLY use BLACK OR BLUE PEN when writing your leaving cert exam, no coloured pens or fluorescent markers allowed on the official exam booklet.

- Coloured pencils can be used (bring to the exam and use to highlight key features on diagram etc.)

- NO TIPPEX is allowed on your exam booklet.

- Remember to fill in the number of the question AND the section of the exam paper in the boxes at the top of EVERY page,
  e.g. Question 2 from Section B will be written as

2	B.

- Fill in the part of the question you are answering in the side margin on the exam booklet.

2	B.

(a)	
(b)	

- NEVER begin a new question on the same page as a previous question, start a NEW QUESTION on a NEW PAGE!

- Understand the terms and language commonly used on Home Economics questions [See "understanding terms]

- Be aware that there WILL be questions on the Home Economics exam that are not directly answered in textbooks. They require higher order thinking where students must relate to practical examples from everyday life. The last part of Question 1 on section B is typical of this style of question.

Understanding Terms

A comprehensive knowledge of the Home Economics course is essential if you want to attain a good grade. However, many students lose marks when answering questions. Not because of lack of knowledge but lack of detail.

Highlighters are not allowed to be used on the written exam paper but they can be used when reading over the exam paper.

These key terms should not be read in isolation, meaning always refer to the allocated marks for each question to confirm how much detail is necessary in each answer.

Students need to have a clear understanding of the terms used on the Home Economics exam.

Practice reading over past exam paper and use a highlighter pen to highlight the key terms as seen in the following sections of sample answers.

Note…every 4 marks is equivalent to 1% of the Home Economics grade.

Describe…

- Give a detailed description of what is being asked
- Diagrams should be given possible
- Always back up with examples

Sample Answer –

2021 Question 2, Section B (Higher Level)

(a) **Describe** how eggs work as an emulsifier in food production.

Refer to one culinary application. (18 marks)

Marking scheme – 5 @ 3 marks (3:2:0)

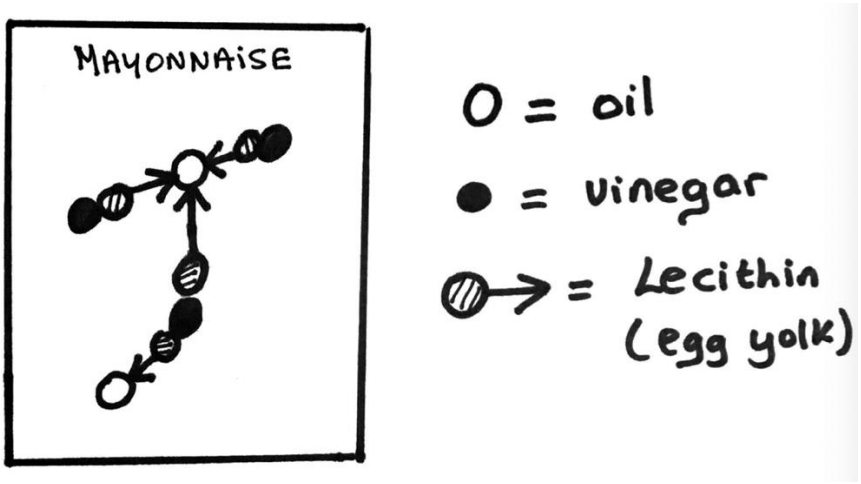
One culinary application – 1 @ 3marks (3:0)

- Eggs contain an emulsifier called Lecithin in egg yolk (example)
- All the emulsifiers are composed of two parts…
    - Hydrophobic tail (water hating)
    - Hydrophilic head (water loving)

(diagram)

The role of emulsifiers in food productions is to hold two immiscible substances together in a permanent emulsion, e.g. oil and vinegar are held together by lecithin in egg yolk during preparation of mayonnaise.

(culinary app)



(diagram)

The Emulsifier (lecithin) works in the following ways…

- The Hydrophobic Tail attaches to the oil
- The Hydrophilic Head attaches to the vinegar
  - Therefore separating the oil droplets from one another and maintain a permanent emulsion**.** **(detailed description)**

Note… 18 marks represents 4.5% of the overall grade for Home Economics, therefore the detail described is very important.

Classify…

- Divide into groups, different categories
- Do not include diagrams
- Always back up with specific examples
- Answers are usually short and concise

Sample answer –

2017 Question 2, Section B (Higher Level)

(b) **Classify** carbohydrates

With reference to **each** class give…

- Chemical formula
- Examples
- Food sources (15)

Marking scheme – 3 classes @ 1 mark each

3 chemical formulas @ 1 mark each

2 examples of each class @ 1 mark each

3 food sources @ 1 mark each

Tip…

- Answer classify in the format of a table ways give two examples of each class

Classify	Chemical formula	Examples	Food source
Monosaccharides	$C_6H_{12}O_6$	- Glucose - Fructose	⇒ Apples ⇒ Honey
Disaccharides	$C_{12}H_{22}O_{11}$	- Lactose - Sucrose	⇒ Milk ⇒ Jam
Polysaccharides	$(C_6H_{10}O_5)n$ n = number of monosaccharides	- Starch - Pectin	⇒ Bread ⇒ Black currants

Differentiate…

- Give details on how two or more items differ from each other.
- A table format is ideal for this type of question.
- Add an extra column to the table that gives headings which the items differ under.
- Always back up with specific examples.

Sample Answer –
2021 Question 3, Section B (Higher Level)

(c) **Differentiate** between infectious food poisoning and toxic food poisoning. **(10 marks)**

Marking scheme – 2 points @ 5 marks each…grading (5:3:2:0)

Food Poisoning

	Infectious	Toxic
Where toxins are produced	Endotoxins – The bacteria is ingested (e.g. Hesophile) and grows/ multiplies within the body producing toxins that result in illness	Exotoxins – The bacteria multiply outside of the body e.g. in canned food therefore the toxins are produced outside the body. toxins are ingested into the body
Ease of destruction	Normal cooking temperatures will destroy both the bacteria and toxins (ease to destroy)	Boiling food that is contaminated is essential to destroy the toxins which are difficult to destroy.
Symptoms	Symptoms may take a number of hours to develop (up to 12 hours)	Symptoms develop quickly (even as quickly as two hours after ingesting)

Example	Listeriosis (food poisoning caused by the bacteria listeria)	Botulism (food poisoning caused by the bacteria Clostridium Botulinum)

Give an account or **discuss…**

- Give a detailed description of what is being asked
- Ideally as much information as you have learned
- Refer to advantages and disadvantages where relevant in the answer.
- Always back up the answer with specific example(s)

Sample Answer –
2019 Question 1, Section B (Higher Level)

(d) Dairy based snacks contribute to micro-nutrient intake.

Give an account of calcium under the following headings:

- Sources
- Biological functions
- Effects of deficiency (18)

Marking scheme – 3 sources @ 2 marks each (2:1:0)

3 functions @ 2 marks each (2:0)

3 effects of deficiency @ 2 marks each (2:0)

Tip…

When answering questions on micro-nutrients (mineral and vitamins) always give 6 sources…4 functions, 4 properties and 4 effects of deficiency; because the marking scheme for micro-nutrients is never consistent.

Sources

1. Dairy products, e.g. milk and cheese
2. Green leafy vegetables, e.g. kale and spinach
3. Fruit, e.g. oranges and mangoes
4. Beans/ peas, e.g. Tofu & baked beans
5. Tinned fish, e.g. sardines and salmon
6. Fortified foods, e.g. fortified white flour and orange juice

Biological functions

1. Calcification is deposited in bones and teeth from early pregnancy along with phosphorous, in the form of calcium phosphate.
2. Blood clotting is assisted by the presence of calcium along with vitamin K.
3. Regulates heart rhythm and helps lower blood pressure.
4. Helps maintain proper nerve and muscle function/muscle tone.

Effects of Deficiency

1. softening of bones due to osteomalicia (middle-aged women), osteoporosis (elderly) and it can cause rickets in children.

2. messages from the nervous system to the brain can be affected. Resulting in nervousness, insomnia, confusion and depression.

3. because of calcium's role in the movement of blood, calcium deficiency can elevate blood pressure and cholesterol.

4. arm and leg muscle spasms and joint pain

"DISCUSS"

Sample Answer
2022 Question 3, Section B (Higher Level)

Micro-organism and enzymes have a role to play in food spoilage and food production.
(a) **Discuss** the role of enzymes in relation to food spoilage. (15 marks)

Marking scheme = 3 points @ 5 marks each…(5:3:2:0)

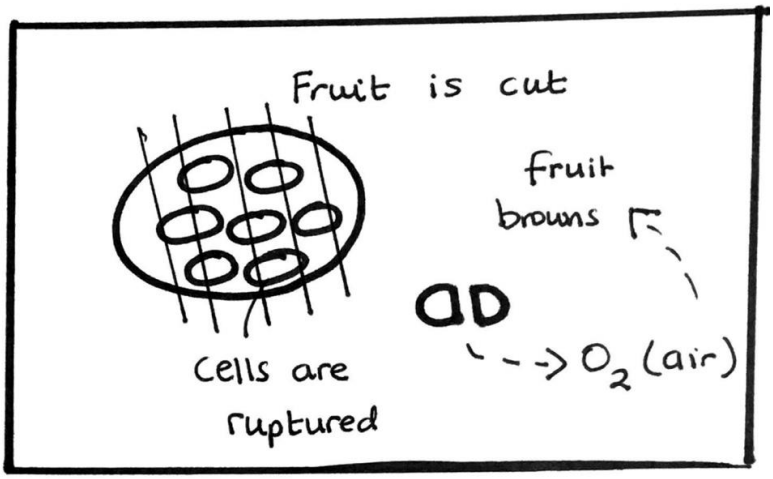
Over ripening of fruits and vegetables

- enzymes in fruits and vegetbales
    - (Bromelin in pineapple and Zingibain in ginger) are still active after harvest and cause fruit and vegetables to ripen; e.g. bannanas… green – yellow
    - However, these enzymes will eventually bring about decay; e.g. yellow - brown- black

(example)

Discolouration of fruit and vegetables

- When fruit and vegetables are peeled, sliced or chopped with a knife, the cells in these are ruptured and enzymes, e.g. oxidase is released. This enzyme reacts with the oxygen in the air and browning results.
    - E.g. the browning of apples or avocados



(example)

Spoilage due to enzyme activity in food

- Lipid foods, e.g. oily fish, bacon and rashers are prone to spoilage due to active enzymes within food.
    - E.g. hydrolytic rancidity **(example)**
- Enzymes in these foods can bring about the hydrolysis of triglycerides where triglycerides "split' into fatty acids and glycerol which is accompanied by a bad odour and taste in the food. This type of rancidity can even occur in a freezer at - 18° Celsius, therefore lipid foods cannot be stored

Note…

- The 5 mark is structured…
    - Main heading
    - Two sub points.

List, Name, Identify or State…

- No detail is required when these terms appear on a question.
- **Diagrams are not expected**
- Brief, concise answers are adequate.
- However, **ALWAYS look at the allocated marks for each term as this may indicate that extra detail may be required.**

Sample Answer

2020 Question 4, Section B (Higher Level)

(a) **Name** one household appliance with a motor suitable for use in the kitchen.
- marking scheme 1 point @ 2 marks
- answer = food processor

2021 Question 1, Section B (Higher Level)
(d) **Identify** and explain two factors which affect the absorption of iron in the body (10 marks)
- marking scheme… Identify 2 factors @ 1 mark each
- answer = factor that assists iron absorption – Vitamin C
- answer = factor that inhibits iron absorption – Tannins

Outline…

- The information required here is **between** NAME and DISCUSS, i.e. a little more information than NAME and a little less information than DISCUSS.
- Give **some details but not a lot on each point**
- Always back up the answer with specific example(s)

Sample Answer
2018 Question 2, Section B (Higher Level)

(c) **Outline** the manufacture/production of one novel (alternative) protein food. (12)
- marking scheme = 1 point @ 2 marks…name the novel protein food
5 marks @ 2 marks for outline the manufacture…name: Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)

Outline stages of production:

- Soya beans are harvested . beans are deshelled and have their outer seed coat removed.
- The beans are crushed into flakes before being ground into soya flour (70-90% protein)
- Carbohydrates are removed by washing the flour, protein powder is left.
- The flour is converted into dough by adding vegetable, seasonings, vitamin B12 and methionine (essential amino acid).
- The dough is then heated under pressure above 100° Celsius and extruded through a nozzle into atmospheric pressure causing dough to expand where it is cut into chunks or mince and dried.

Explain…

- Very detailed information is required
- **Include a diagram**/s where possible
- Back up answer with specific example/s.
- Refer to **role/ function/working** principle **if applicable** to the answer.

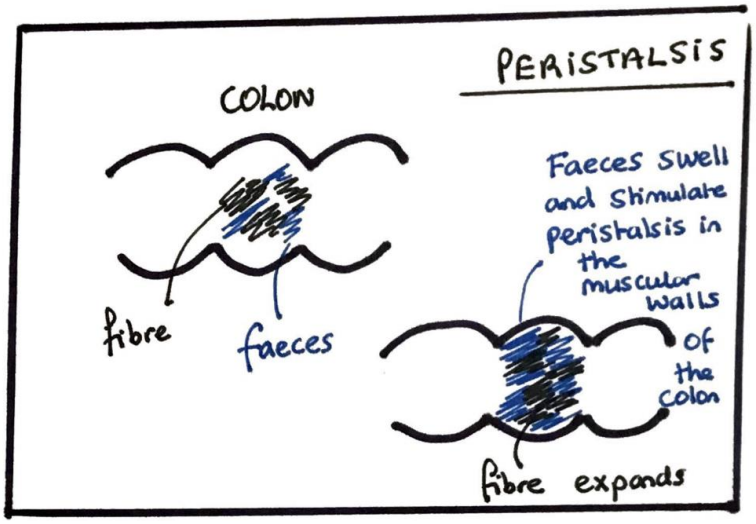
Sample answer

2020 Question 2, Section B Higher Level

(c) Explain the benefits of a diet high in fibre.

Marking scheme = 3 benefits @ 4 marks each (4:2:0) (12 marks)

- Stimulates peristalsis to prevent bowel disorders
  - Fibre is hygroscopic, it absorbs up to six times its own weight in water. As the fibre is mixed through faeces, the fibre swells and therefore the faeces expands. The expanded faeces pushes against the muscular walls of the colon causing them to contract and relax. This wave like movement (peristalsis) causes the faeces to move along the colon where it is eventually excreted. Excretion ensures potential toxins are removed out of the body and constipation is avoided.



Fibre helps lower cholesterol

- Some types of fibre i.e. soluble fibre found in avocados, pears, oats, beans, apples, barley etc. contain plant sterols.
- Plant sterols are thought to decrease the absorption of cholesterol in the intestine therefore, lowering "LDL" (low density lipoprotein) cholesterol and reducing the risk of coronary heart disease.

Provide bulk in the diet

- Foods high in fibre e.g. nuts, fruits vegetables, wholemeal breads, cereals are filling yet low in kilocalories. These foods provide bulk in dishes e.g. chunky vegetables in soups/casseroles therefore less food is eaten.