

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/01
Fibres, Fabrics and Design

Key messages

There was evidence of good knowledge and understanding of design and textiles. However, some answers omitted to know the difference between fibres (e.g. cotton, wool, polyester) and fabrics (e.g. cotton calico, polyester satin) and at Advanced Level, this would be expected. Sketches varied in quality, and fashion sketches in particular could be drawn larger and should show details of stitching (where appropriate), fastenings, pocket and other design details. Although sketches are not always required in answers, in some cases, it could facilitate the explanations required.

General comments

There was a wide range of marks in the scripts this year although almost all candidates had followed the rubric and had answered the correct number of questions. There was evidence of some very good answers where candidates had learned their work well.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) (i) The microscopic view of wool was usually well known and there were some accurately drawn views of wool fibres.
- (ii) This part was less well known and fewer candidates gained full marks. In general, not enough detail was given to explain why wool can be successfully blended with acrylic. The answers showed knowledge of fibre crimp, insulation and absorbency but often this was submitted as a list without giving reasons.
- (b) This question produced a variety of answers. Scripts which scored high marks were able to give details of the use of warp and weft threads in different colours and the variations which could be achieved on woven wool fabrics. Many candidates knew about Jacquard and dobby weaves in addition to plain and twill weaves. When yarns are dyed different colours, a wide range of variations can be achieved such as stripes, checks, etc.
- (c) Scripts which scored higher marks were able to give appropriate performance characteristics and could then include specific details discussing the details between them for wool and acrylic. In cases where lower marks were achieved, this was due to a list of points being given which were not always discussed as asked for in the question, so could only gain minimum marks. Commonly chosen characteristics included warmth, absorbency, care, strength and flammability.

Question 2

- (a) (i) Many scripts gained full marks for this section and the construction of cotton twill and viscose jersey were well known in most cases. Nylon raschel was less known although most candidates knew that this was warp knitted. Although diagrams were not asked for, credit was given for these as in some cases, it helped the candidate to describe the construction.

- (ii) Relevant examples of fabrics for clothing were usually given although a few candidates gave examples of household items for nylon raschel, which was not asked for in the question. For cotton twill, answers could have included a dress, jeans, jacket, etc. Explanations included points such as cotton twill, which is a firm weave and is hardwearing, strong, washable and keeps its shape.

Viscose jersey could have been used for a dress, top, shorts, and reasons given included flexibility/elasticity, comfort due to air pockets, absorbency, comfort/softness, etc. Nylon raschel could be used for an evening dress, dress, top and reasons given were: hardwearing, firm fabric, and easy care.

- (b) There were some very good answers of how CAD can be used to develop woven or printed patterns but some weaker responses showed little knowledge and understanding. There were many points which could have been included. For example, answers could have included that images can be scanned, photographs can be uploaded, designs can be saved and amended easily; any colours can be used, sample swatches/fabrics can be produced directly, warp and weft colours can be changed easily for woven fabrics, repeats are easy to produce, etc.

Section B

Question 3

- (a) The term 'classic trend' was usually known and at least one example was generally given. Some of the examples were not detailed enough to gain full marks for this section.
- (b) Quite a number of responses gained high marks for this question and some sketches were excellent. However, many sketches did not show construction details, e.g. main seams or fastenings, so could not gain full marks. For example, it would be expected that if a zipper is included in the sketch, the seam (which is constructed first) should also be visible. Some skirts did not have a fastening at all so it would be hard to put these garments on if they were made up in fabric. As sketches should have had labelling, this should also have been included on the labels. A few candidates used the silhouette provided on the question paper (although many did not need to use this) and produced very good sketches. The chosen trends varied, and were usually appropriate.
- (c) (i) This was usually well known by candidates although some repeated the points for the need to make a prototype of a garment before production, or were not able to give a detailed explanation so could not be awarded full marks. However, there were some good answers.
- (ii) The answers giving the description of the stages involved in making a prototype varied, although where answers were detailed, the correct order of working was given.
- (d) In some cases there were some very good answers and fashion cycles were well known, with relevant examples and the main stages being given. A number of scripts showed poor understanding of fashion cycles.

Question 4

- (a) (i) Factors which influence a designer when producing new garments was well known by most candidates although points were not always well explained.
- (ii) This was sometimes very well answered and popular points included colours, weave, ease of working, style of garment, and weight of fabric for the garments.
- (b) Grading, quality control and pressing/steaming were usually well known and gained high marks although some candidates could have provided more detailed explanations.
- (c) The answers to this question were variable. Weaker responses lacked sufficient detail and this prevented access to full marks for some candidates. Common answers included flexibility of the fabric to fit, drape, variety of thicknesses and types of garments, costs and examples to support these.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/02
Practical

Key messages

Many different types of garments were made this year using a variety of challenging cutting and sewing techniques.

Centres are advised to check their proposed style and tasks for the examination well in advance of the actual examination date.

Commercial paper patterns if used, specify the correct and suitable fabric needed for the garment to be made successfully. Centres are advised to follow the guidelines and submit the patterns used.

General comments

Each candidate's examination written work, garment and paper pattern should be presented together and **not** separated.

Garment name labels need to be stitched on as pins present health and safety risks. Metal staples should **not** be used.

Marks awarded should be to the nearest whole number. Fractions and decimal numbers are **not** accepted.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates showed an understanding of the prescribed test. Instructions for the examination found on the **Practical Test Task Sheet** need to be issued to the candidates.
- (b) Planning of requirements was omitted by some Centres. Candidates should be provided with a **Shopping List** form if needed, so as to list their fabrics and notions. Lined paper or booklets to write on should also be provided. Graph paper is useful for drawing cutting layouts. Candidates need to list the resources they will need.
- (c) Fabric and notions for the **Justification of Choice** were omitted by some Centres. Marks are awarded for justifying the suitability of fabric and notions for the design and function of the garment to be made, e.g. suitable weight and length of zip for the fabric and design proposed. Fabric names, structure, fibre content and finish are important to the final performance and purpose of the garment to be made.

Question 2

- (a) The following range of pattern drafting and adaptations were evident in the patterns submitted.
- All paper patterns, drafted and commercial, need to be submitted for examination purposes.**
- (i) Reshaping a front neckline to accommodate a zipper on a commercial pattern. Only a few candidates reshaped the front opening. Many candidates left the back seam in and did not adjust the neckline facing.
- (ii) Adding additional vertical tuck to shorts, along the shorts crease line. Adding tucks to a neckline.
- (iii) Adding patch pockets with pleats and flaps, adding hip pockets concealed in side seams.

- (iv) Adding a waistband to a skirt.
 - (v) Drafted A Line skirts with waistbands.
 - (vi) Drafted trousers gathered into yokes.
 - (vii) Drafted skirts gathered into yokes with darts at waistline and waistband.
 - (viii) Drafted blouses with one sleeve, a neckline facing, frill at hemline attached to a waistband.
 - (ix) Drafted dress with a bodice and skirt. The front bodice has princess seams. The back bodice has waistline darts. The skirt has a C. Front box pleat and the remaining skirt has continuous knife pleats. An additional tie belt and flower was made.
- (b) Time plans accompanying the order of work need to be presented in table format listed under two headings.

Preparation and Pattern Alteration and Implementation.

- (i) The time taken for each task should be listed in a column.
 - (ii) The **total time** for the **Preparation and Pattern Alteration** and the **Implementation** stated separately.
 - (iii) Candidates did not always include the time needed for testing and fitting the garment. A prototype was made to assess the fit and styling of the garment.
- (c) Candidates making their own patterns drew a cutting layout. These needed labelling with the straight of grain, folded fabric and the quantity of pieces to be cut.
- (d) The Centres provided a comment and mark for the fitting. Garments need to be tacked for the fitting stage. Half garments are not appropriate. Prototypes are acceptable.

Question 3

- (a) The Centres wrote a comment and awarded a mark for organisation and time management.
- (b) Tasks:

Darts, pleats and tucks

Waistline darts placed at the front and back of skirts and bodices were generally well made and pressed towards the centre. Securing the ends of the darts maybe done by reverse machining which is more secure as opposed to tying or darning in the ends.

There was a complex arrangement of combined darts and pleats on dress bodices which were skillfully executed. Predominant errors were topstitching the pleats and eliminating the fullness. Tucks were used as a decorative element along the front crease line of shorts.

Seams and seam allowances

Bodice and skirt attachment should follow a continuous seam around the waistline.

Open seams neatened with a zigzag stitch: The stitch tension and zig zag stitch was generally too open, especially on linen fabrics which fray badly. Many candidates stitched the zig zag stitch away from the seam allowance edges leaving the allowance edges raw.

Open seams neatened with overlocking stitch: Generally well stitched with good tension. The colour of the thread was not always suitable; if possible dark threads should be used for dark fabrics and light threads for lighter shades. Candidates are advised to practice using overlockers for health and safety reasons as they need to be careful of the cutting blade.

Princess seams: These curved seams needed neatening before stitching in the piping and sections of the bodice together.

Trouser crotch seams are usually reinforced with a second line of straight stitching.

Yokes

Yokes on trousers were incomplete and not successful due to the following reasons:

- (i) Stitched on upside down.
- (ii) Sections cut off so as to make the yoke fit onto the trouser legs.
- (iii) On the centre back seam of the yoke, the edges were different lengths.
- (iv) Yokes were incomplete with the facing/lining not attached.
- (v) The yoke facing/lining does not need fusing as it only adds extra bulk and weight to the garment.

Yokes on skirts were generally made successfully.

Ruffles

A ruffle is a decorative, narrower piece of fabric that may be cut in a circle or cut on the bias and gathered. Ruffles were added to the hemline of a waistband on blouses. They were exceptionally well made with even depth and very good disposal of fullness.

Gathers

For gathers to be successful, enough fullness has to be drafted into the paper/card pattern. Many candidates making skirts and trousers with yokes and gathering the lower trouser leg or skirt sections into the yoke found that there was not enough fabric to produce a successful result. Some of the gathering ended up as small pleats and generally the dispersal of fullness was poor.

Fastenings – zippers, hooks & eyes, buttons and buttonholes

Decorative zips in dress front openings were generally inserted successfully. Some candidates opted for cutting out the front neckline facing pattern piece and combining it with the zip application. This was mostly unsuccessful with zips stitched over the top of the facing, the facing joined together at the lower end or shortened at the sides, edges not even and showing when the zip was opened.

Invisible zips were very popular for skirts and most were inserted successfully.

Pockets

Side seam pockets: The pocket bags were made successfully. The top of the pocket needs to be set into the waistband seam.

Waistbands and elasticated casings

Most waistbands were fused and attached successfully. The overlap of waistband at the opening is usually placed on the underside. The end of the waistband that shows on the right side is usually in line with the opening so there is a continuous line running from top to bottom. Machining of the waistband should be stitched on the inside with the right sides together. The inside of the waistband may be ditch stitched from the right side.

Elasticated casings were generally not successful. The casings need to be slightly wider to accommodate the width of the elastic. Most casings were far too wide, uneven and the machining poor. Openings for inserting the elastic were left opened and should be secured.

Sleeves

When drafting set-in sleeves, notches are needed to mark the back and front of the sleeve as they are different heights.

The sleeve head should be slightly larger than the top of the armhole. The sleeve head needs two parallel lines of gathering to be successfully inserted into the armhole. Two lines (within the seam allowance) of straight machine stitching with a loose bottom tension can disperse the sleeve head fullness across the top of the sleeve, especially in woven fabrics. Inserting a pleat at the sleeve head does not give enough ease throughout the top of the sleeve for ease of movement when wearing the garment.

A raglan sleeve with three seam allowances neatened with a zig-zag stitch: The hem was often not completed.

Facings

Back facing at neckline: A back neck facing was to be included which was either drafted or the commercial paper pattern used. The back neck facings were generally interfaced. A variety of fusings were used, some too heavy for the weight of fabric or too lightweight with the fusing coming away.

Hemming at the shoulder seam was difficult to keep flat where a heavier weight fabric was used. Understitching on the facing neckline seam allowances when completed was successfully done. The facing was hemmed onto the bodice back which is not necessary. A narrow machined hem, machine stitched along the edge and encasing the interfacing leaving the hem free of the garment back, was required. Many facings were incomplete at the shoulder seams. This was a difficult task to complete having to accommodate extra bulk from the zip, as well as the bodice shoulder and the back facing seam allowances.

Variations in attaching the front and back bodice at the shoulder seams and attaching the back facing to the neckline were mostly as follows:

The facing was attached to the back bodice neckline prior to stitching the shoulder seams. Where the facing was hemmed to the back bodice, this resulted in the seam allowances showing at the shoulder edges.

The shoulder seams were stitched together first. The facing was attached to the back bodice neckline. The facing shoulder seam allowance was used as a hem and attached to the bodice shoulder seam allowance encasing the zip end.

Other neckline facings were generally made well. The ironed on interfacing needs to be lightweight so as to allow the facing to lie flat.

There is no need to hem the edges of facings to the garment. They are usually held down with a few stitches at the seam allowances.

Skirt vents

Frequent errors for back seam vents were as follows:

The corner was not clipped to allow the back seam to be opened.

Edge stitching on the vent extensions stitched on the wrong side.

Vent not stitched at right angles, with extension stitched into the skirt back seam.

Hems

There were some highly successful hems with mitred corners at the vent opening. Where a vent is not mitred the hem should lie under the vent. Many candidates hemmed over the vent. Narrow machined hems were popular, the most successful ones were narrow and double stitched.

Question 4

- (a) Conclusive comments were often missing. This part provides an invitation for candidates to summarise and comment on their experience in a concise paragraph. For example, responses could have included possible changes that could have been made which would have been beneficial to their final garments.

- (b) Candidates predominately focused on their strengths and weaknesses during the implementation stage. Most candidates commented on their time management and problems they encountered with machinery. There were references to fabrics and notions mentioned, their suitability, which should have been noted in the planning of requirements and justification of choice in **Question 1(c)**.
- (c) There were some excellent results with candidates showing a very high standard of technical ability and knowledge in both pattern cutting and construction.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/03
Textile Applications and Technology

Key messages

Make sure the question is being answered in enough detail and give examples to illustrate points where they are asked for. Sketches should show details of construction lines, e.g. where there is a zip, it is usually at the top of a seam so both should be visible; include labelling on the sketches where style features are included, e.g. top stitched hem.

If the question asks about fabrics, candidate responses should include the fibre content (e.g. cotton) is included with the type of construction (e.g. twill) so the fabric name will be: cotton twill. At advanced level candidates responses are expected to demonstrate the difference between fibres and fabrics.

General comments

This question paper includes questions which cover textile applications as well as textile technology.. Candidates are advised to write in as much detail as possible to gain higher marks. This includes giving examples to explain further any points made in the answers. Some responses had not considered the questions carefully enough and had omitted to include points about manufacturing. This relates in particular to **Question 1(a)** and **3(a)** and **(b)** and **4(b)**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This was a compulsory question.

- (a)** Responses varied for this question and candidates needed to pay attention to why the factors stated were important for the manufacturer. This could have included points about the equipment needed, staffing requirements, costing of fabric and components, etc.
- (b)** Responses to this question were well answered, particularly so for parts (iii) environmental issues and (i) fitness. Some responses had written about the fit of garments, which was not correct. Safety of textiles (ii) was also usually demonstrated with examples detailing fire safety and flammability of textiles and how to reduce it.
- (c)** Fabric finishes is a topic usually well-known and many different examples were included in candidate responses. Performance characteristics of fabrics with finishes and, several different examples were often included to illustrate these points. Better responses showed good knowledge and understanding about the choice of different fabrics and garments as well as different types of finishes.

Question 2

This was a compulsory question.

- (a) Factors to consider when choosing which traditional creative techniques to use on textile items were mainly well known. Usual answers included the type of culture and which materials were needed to produce the technique. Other answers candidates could have considered included the suitability of the techniques for the item and time taken to produce the techniques.
- (b) All candidates gave a relevant traditional creative technique. Popular choices included Mola work, hand embroidery, batik and tie and dye. Discussion of the equipment required varied though with some candidates listing the equipment but not always justifying their choices which was asked for in the question.
- (c) Choosing fabrics for the creative techniques was usually well answered with relevant points being given. Many answers included details about care and laundering and whether colouring techniques would be suitable for the fabrics.
- (d) Care and labelling of textile items is usually well-known and answers were generally very good although sometimes not enough detail was given. Other points could have included dry cleaning, stain removal and details about these.

Section B

Question 3

- (a) This question was about the factors to be considered when selecting fabrics for ladies trousers. Many answers included points about performance characteristics such as comfort, washability, absorbency, handle, etc. Discussion varied with shorter answers explaining points of information about the fabrics for trousers and fuller answers giving other wider points about cost of fabrics, construction methods of the fabrics (woven, knitted), colouring methods and weight of fabrics, special finishes for specific uses of the trousers (e.g. crease resistance for evening wear, stain resistance for work wear,) etc.
- (b) Answers which gained fewer marks had included a list of points with little discussion. There are many ways of producing pockets, seams, fastenings, etc., when manufacturing a large quantity of fabrics. Better answers could have included knowledge and understanding how these might be selected for different fabrics and different styles of trousers. The main features which were included in answers were seams, waist finishes and assessment of the range of construction techniques was occasionally answered as construction of the fabrics (e.g. plain weave, twill weave) which was not correct for this question. Answer which had included labelled diagrams had the potential for higher marks.

Question 4

- (a) The term 'product development' was not always well known. After initial ideas had been produced, the next stage would be to choose the best ideas and take them forward with further refinements. This would include further ideas for pockets, fastenings, stitch details, etc. Sketches would show further ideas. A few candidates had included sketches although many did not. This was not a requirement but candidates could have used sketches to give specific examples.
- (b) Candidates found this question difficult. It was asking for discussion of the points which need to be considered by the manufacturer when planning production of a new fashion item. Answers could have included the time scale and deadlines, how many products being produced; which materials/components need to be provided; which colours; what equipment is needed, etc.
- (c) This question was about the safe use of machinery when producing fashion items. This could have included points such as appropriate risk assessments, regular safety checks of equipment, electrical safety, staff training, reporting of accidents; use of safety equipment, e.g. finger guards on sewing machines; ear protectors for noisy machinery, etc. Many answers had included some of the points which need to be considered but not enough details had been given in many cases so only the most detailed answers had scored high marks.

Question 5

- (a) (i)** The colouring of yarns discussion was generally well attempted. Answers including colouring staple fibres; adding colour to spinning solutions of man-made fibres; self-coloured cottons, space dyeing and combining coloured fibres to make a multi coloured ply yarns was also well known.
- (ii)** Colouring of fabrics answers included details of dyeing, tie dyeing and printing. This was well known by many candidates with some answers including well labelled sketches to show the processes.
- (b)** The assessment of a range of surface decorative effects which can add both colour and texture was well answered. Popular answers included applique, quilting, embroidery (different threads), addition of ribbons, beads, sequins, etc. Sketches were often included and many answers showed very good knowledge and understanding of the range of processes available to add colour and texture.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/04
Coursework

Key messages

It is very important for candidates to show their initial design ideas. They should not launch from theme visuals to final ideas without any references to anything else.

Fewer than 3% of Centres had used pins within their work this year, which is a great improvement upon last year.

Pleasing to see more creative and unusual products with a real personal link. For example, a candidate 'Girl-Guide' designing a tent/rug which had a clear realistic outcome with a focus on the '*Fit-For-Purpose*'.

'RECYCLING' as a main theme continues to be popular which demonstrates the impact of environmental issues and education on a global scale.

General comments

Centres must, whenever possible, ensure that work can be looked at easily and be mindful of the size of finished products being submitted.

Consider sending cushions with no inners to cut down on size and transportation.

It was interesting to note that a number of candidates were inspired by a variety of 'High-Profile' designers; in particular the legendary Alexander McQueen.

Whilst fabric painting can be an appropriate technique it does need to be executed correctly with appropriate materials and mediums. It is, therefore, important not to use acrylic paint on fabric as it is not seen as '*Fit-For-Purpose*' in terms of the final finish, drape and after-care of the product.

Photographic evidence within folder work is extremely important and the majority of candidates managed to show this well.

Administration

It is important that work is attached together securely. The use of *Sellotape* is not an acceptable method to use as this easily detaches from heavy folders.

Candidates working in one design folder continue to be seen and should be actively encouraged. These folders are generally more concise and stronger in terms of theme and are definitely a better time management for candidates.

Other examples of good practice are where candidates create one A4 folder which provides all the written and thought processes and one A3 folder with all the design work, worked samples and creative evidence to complete the coursework specification.

Research, aims and analysis

It is important that candidates include only essential information in their design folders. For example, information given on cotton and wadding does not help to move the design process forward and therefore is unnecessary.

Generally, in terms of existing products, 'Analysis' is done well but in some cases this needs to be refined. It is important to be selective in the choice of examples rather than repeating the process with the same conclusions. This has the effect of generating more paperwork than is necessary.

It is important to show how research links into the development of the selected product and that these two elements do not stand alone. One must lead into the other.

Planning and development

Annotation on designs is absolutely necessary to enable the communication of thoughts and ideas. Use of pre-done cartoon characters, for example 'Sponge Bob', does not demonstrate a good understanding and development of design skills and may also raise the issues of copyright. Therefore, designs need to be unique and individual with an emphasis on being creative. It was pleasing to see that only appropriate fabric testing was demonstrated, which is much improved from a number of years ago.

Process – carrying out the coursework tasks

Consideration of the size of the product and how it evidences the skill of a candidate is important. For example, a bed sheet or cover is a very large item with showing mainly repetitive skills. Candidates, who used a combination of more challenging materials with interesting shape and had less repetition in their work, accessed the higher marks. It is important, where appropriate, to create original component examples as this is an area in which many highly creative students could excel.

Realisation – quality of the outcome

It is extremely important to create three products that are equal in level of skill. There were a significant number of candidates that had one well executed product and then a second product of a lower skill level. This sometimes extends to, in some cases, the third product. All products need to demonstrate high levels of skill in order to access the higher marks. Time management and organisation are important allocations given to ensure that quality is paramount. The use of glued-on trimmings and accessories are not to be encouraged even though there is a potential to save some time with this method. The outcome, in terms of drape of fabric and presentation of product, is not within the high skill set.

Evaluation

The evaluations, in general, still have issues which need to be addressed. For example, this could be the time management of candidates that do not have enough time at the end of the project to put their thoughts and ideas together or it could be that they are unable to thoroughly address what is asked of them; perhaps because of the perceived complexity of an evaluation. It is also worth bearing in mind that the evaluation has a maximum of 25 marks which does include the presentation of the folder in terms of structure, organisation, drawings and photographs etc. There were still a number of Centres who did not use the folder space effectively and created large, heavy folders which had an excessive number of pages containing scant information. It is important to create interesting and busy folders which show concise and relevant information on each page rather than unnecessary amounts spread out over many.

The evaluation should include the following:

- Write about the outcomes of the task and draw conclusions about the process.
- Consider the original aim of the projects and how it is evidenced in the final outcomes.
- Consider the strengths and weaknesses in each product.
- Show which areas of the task have been well executed and to what level this has been evidenced.
- How effective has the choice of techniques, materials and shape been?
- Consider future developments that could be explored. For example, other products that would fit into the theme or similar products which have been developed further.