

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/01
Fibres, Fabrics and Design

Key messages

There was plenty of evidence of a good level of knowledge and understanding of design and textiles. It is a good idea for candidates to read the questions carefully, focussing on the key words in the question, before starting to write their answers. Candidates need to ensure that they include detailed, relevant and specific examples in their answers.

General comments

Candidates had answered the correct number of questions and all questions had been attempted. More candidates chose to answer **Question 3** than **Question 4**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) (i) and (ii) The majority of candidates seemed to understand the difference between the two types of knitting.
- (b) There were some good responses to this question but other responses needed to include more information about the structure, appearance and the production of the fabric.
- (c) Many candidates provided some strong answers for the stretch characteristics but some answers required a demonstration of greater knowledge about yarn suitability. There was some good evidence of candidates comparing the characteristics using a table. Candidates seemed to be more familiar with weft knitting rather than warp knitting.
- (d) As above, some answers needed to demonstrate more specific examples regarding warp knitting and more comparisons between warp knitted and woven fabrics.

Question 2

- (a) (i) This was generally answered well.
- (ii) Many candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the origin of the more common regenerated fibres and most candidates attempted the question.
- (iii) More common fabrics were included in candidates' answers. Candidates need to ensure that they give the name of a fabric rather than just the fibre.
- (b) This question was answered well and many candidates knew the difference between the two types of fibres. Candidates seemed to be more familiar with polyester fibres on the whole. Answers were often given in the form of a list.
- (c) On the whole, candidates seemed to understand what woven polyester fabrics could be used for. This question was worth eight marks and some answers could have gone into more detail in order to achieve full marks.

Question 3

- (a) There were some solid answers from candidates that included clear and well thought-out influences. Some responses needed to demonstrate a better understanding of influences that can lead to changes in fashion styles.
- (b) This question was answered well by the majority of candidates who clearly understood the term 'fashion revival'. In some responses, more specific examples could have been given.
- (c) There were some good responses and discussion about local designers, but candidates need to include key designers such as Gucci and Mary Quant in their answers as well some discussion regarding how the styles have changed over time (e.g. pre and post war and the introduction of synthetics).
- (d) Many responses demonstrated a good level of knowledge regarding new developments of fibres and fabrics. However, some responses needed to demonstrate a clearer explanation of how the style of ladies' skirts had been influenced by these new developments.

Question 4

- (a) (i) The majority of candidates provided strong responses to this question.
 - (ii) Candidates demonstrated a high level of knowledge of cutting methods used in the classroom but a demonstration of greater knowledge regarding cutting methods used in industry such as laser cutters and band saws was required.
- (b) Many responses included clear explanations of how to mark fabric as they would in the classroom but the question clearly asked for methods used in manufacturing.
- (c) Many candidates continued to discuss the marking of fabrics and seemed to be unfamiliar with the methods outlined in the question.
- (d) Candidates discussed the stages involved in garment making well, which included other stages, not just pattern making. But candidates needed to concentrate solely on patterns, as stipulated in the question.

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Paper 9631/02
Practical Test

Key messages and General Comments

- The variety of garments produced this year made an interesting collection, with the introduction of shorts, sleeved and sleeveless tops, shirts and a child's dress.
- The tasks set provided candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate a wide variety of skills.
- It was evident that a lot of effort and enthusiasm was put into the work that the candidates produced.
- Please note that there is no need to send unused fabrics with the candidates' garments.

Comments on Specific Questions

Question 1

Task Analysis and Planning

- (a) Candidates showed good understanding of the tasks set by their centre.
- (b) Printed and plain cotton fabrics were predominantly chosen. The material and notion requirements should state quantities. Other requirements or resources e.g. a sewing machine should also be listed.
- (c) The fabric and components need to be justified for the garment chosen. Reference should be made to the suitability of the fabric and components, for the garment to be worn. Candidates need to focus on fibre content, its properties and fabric structure. For example:
- (i) The weave of the fabric.
 - (ii) The weight of the fabric in relation to the garment's end use e.g. formal occasion, uniform, casual.
 - (iii) How appropriate the fabric is for the design, regarding wear and tear.
 - (iv) Reasons for choosing components for the style to be made.

Question 2

Preparation

- (a) Paper patterns used by each candidate should be submitted together with the garment for assessment of any drafting or alterations made.
- (b) Candidates should be provided with a diagram of the approved garment they are to make at the start of the examination. Changes to the style of the garment should not be made during the implementation stage.
- (c) There were some very good diagrams of pattern drafting and garment cutting layouts showing how the fabric was laid. The fold of fabric and selvages were labelled. Pattern pieces were drawn on the cutting layout to show cutting on the fold, on the straight of grain and bias.

Question 3

Implementation

Organisation and time management

The centres provided comments/marks for the fitting of the garment which were carried forward.

Question 3

Implementation

Tasks

- (b) The tasks set lead to the production of the following garments: Shirts, a child's dress, tops with and without sleeves and shorts with pockets.

(1) Disposal of fullness, darts, pleats, gathers

Bust and Back shoulder darts were stitched, secured and pressed well.

Back waistline darts, on shorts were well made, tapering to a point and secured. Most were pressed towards the centre Back seam.

Box pleats on the back of shirts were generally well made with the pleat edges meeting at the centre.

Gathers used as disposal of fullness in a bodice at the bust line were well made.

(2) **Seams and seam finishes**

Seams generally were not so well finished mainly due to using fabrics which frayed badly e.g. linen.

Candidates are advised to test the stitching on the fabric they will be working on before the examination.

Seam allowances were often left too wide and stitched with loose over locking or too open a zigzag stitch.

The predominately used zigzag stitch needed to have a shorter stitch length and a wider zigzag stitch.

Over locking stitches varied from very successful to where the stitch tension was far too loose for the fabric which was being over locked.

(3) **Yokes, waistbands and facings**

Yokes on shirts and sleeveless tops were generally very well made with precise machining at both front and back yoke seams and with the yoke linings stitched as one seam.

Waistbands on shorts were, generally, not so well attached; due to the apparent misunderstanding of its shaping.

The top edge of the waistband and facing is the narrower edge.

The lower edge of the waistband and facing is the wider edge.

This creates a shaped waistband that sits at the top of the hipline and waistline.

Some waistbands were attached to the shorts upside down.

Waistband facings generally were interfaced well with excess seam allowances trimmed.

Some facings were stitched with seam lines mismatched to the waistband.

(4) Fastenings – Zippers, Hooks and Eyes, Buttons and Buttonholes, Buttons and Fabric Loops

Concealed/invisible zippers in blouses were inserted to a high standard.

Inserting invisible zippers into shorts seemed to be challenging for many candidates.

The complication was with the inclusion of the zip in the waistband. But those who succeeded achieved a high standard of finish.

Hooks and eyes were generally not stitched so well.

Buttons and buttonholes need accurate marking on the openings where they are to be stitched.

The position of the buttonholes need to correspond to the buttons. Testing the buttonhole on a spare piece of fabric helps to alleviate the problem of the buttonhole not fitting the button and tests the stitching on the fabric used.

Buttons and fabric loops. Ball buttons were mostly used for the centre back top opening on sleeveless tops. Some were a little too large and heavy for the top, but most were stitched on successfully, with a corresponding fabric loop. Generally speaking, fabric loops are easier to work in the closure of the garment, if made from bias strips. Some of the loops were too wide and cut on the straight of grain, making it difficult to close over the button.

(5) Collars

Shirt collars were successfully attached, only needing attention to the collar points, the seam allowances needed grading and trimming.

(6) Sleeves, Bound armholes and necklines

Shirt sleeves were well made with the sleeve armhole stitched first to the sleeve head and the shirt side seam stitched as one with the sleeve seam. Seam allowances tended to be too wide creating bulk at the underarm.

Tops with sleeves were set in well. Some seam allowances were unfinished and too wide. The ruffle feature at the elbow was well constructed and attached.

Armholes and necklines on tops were finished successfully using self-fabric bias strips.

(7) Pockets

Patch pockets on shorts and shirts were very well made. The edges were even and points well defined.

Topstitching was even. A few hems at the pocket openings were not secured. Some of the corners at the top of the pockets needed a triangle of straight or zig zag stitches to secure the edges of the pocket opening.

Pockets with flaps in general were very successful. The flap complementing the pocket, was well positioned and secured.

(8) Hems

Rolled machined hems on sleeve ruffles were well made. The hem needed to be stitched after the seam allowances were neatened in order to avoid the ruffle seam allowances showing at the hem edge.

Straight stitched machined hems were successfully made on shorts, shirts, sleeveless tops and a child's dress.

Question 4

Evaluation

- (a)** A relatively small number of candidates wrote a conclusion. Those who did commented on their achievements.
- (b)** Candidates commented on the time taken for the practical examination, with reference to the implementation stage, such as the difficulties they encountered with machinery and what improvements they would make if given the opportunity to repeat the examination. Some candidates wrote the order of work for constructing their garment but this should be listed in the Production Plan.
- (c)** Candidates stated whether they thought they had done well or not. Reference was made to the ease or difficulty of using specific fabrics and machinery.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

<p>Paper 9631/03 Textile Applications and Technology</p>
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Key messages

Candidates need to take note of the command word given at the beginning of the question: A 'discuss' and 'assess' question requires a detailed response with reference to relevant examples as opposed to a list of points. Particular attention should be given to the key words in a question so that candidates can:

- Understand what the question demands
- Directly relate a detailed response to the correct subject of the question
- Identify the most relevant examples to include in their answers

General comments

Most of the questions were well attempted this year and overall marks were good. Candidates had answered the correct number of questions.

There were three questions where candidates were asked to sketch items of clothing which they generally did well.

Most candidates opted for **Questions 3** and **5**, a minority of candidates chose **Question 4**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) (i) This was answered well; and many factors were considered and included in candidates' responses.
- (ii) The majority of candidates sketched suitable items carefully and labelled them clearly. Sometimes only the fibre (e.g. cotton) had been stated instead of the fabric.
- (b) This was generally answered well and the majority of candidates were able to clearly explain why their particular design was fit for a child.
- (c) Candidates were largely aware of a number of fabric finishes and how they could alter the fabrics. This was generally answered well.

Question 2

- (a) Many responses included an explanation of the actual process of dyeing fabrics rather than the preparation before the dyeing. The stronger candidates knew about checking for faults, washing and bleaching the fabric and they seemed familiar with having to add a fixative such as salt to the dye.
- (b) The majority of responses demonstrated a sound knowledge of the different methods and applied the information by describing rather than comparing.

- (c) The majority of candidates answered this question well. Most responses showed a greater level of understanding regarding consumer recycling compared to manufacturers' recycling. The stronger candidates, however, recognised and explained how industry could recycle textiles.

Question 3

- (a) There were some really beautiful sketches of tops which had been well thought out and labelled with interesting style features. Fabrics had been labelled, but candidates did not always use the fabric name, only the fibre.
- (b) On the whole, the majority of candidates provided strong responses to this question. However, some responses misinterpreted the question and discussed fabric testing. Some responses included explanations of what testing and sampling involved but did not explain the importance of it.
- (c) This question was worth 12 marks and candidates were asked to assess different fabrics. Some responses were limited to a list of fabrics and their advantages.

Question 4

- (a) The majority of candidates wrote about various different trimmings that they had used. However, only the stronger candidates gave examples of how they could be applied to fabric.
- (b) The majority of responses demonstrated a lack of understanding about the difference between the three types of launders and about the consumer. On the whole, **Question 4** was not a popular choice.

Question 5

- (a) Some interesting sketches of jackets were observed. Many responses demonstrated knowledge of one, but not two, embroidery techniques. Common stitches were free machining, zig zag, straight stitches or hand embroidered stitches.
- (b) On the whole, responses showed a good understanding of machine embroidery being a quicker process than free machining. But many responses included instructions of how to sew certain stitches when the question asked for a comparison.

The majority of candidates knew a number of decorative techniques that they could write about. Some answers consisted of a list with no assessment.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/04
Coursework

Key Messages

- Centres continue to excel at the creativity part of the specification where unusual and unique products had been developed.
- There seemed to be an emphasis on the use of paint on fabric which is considered not to be an appropriate medium for working on fabric – it not only changes the weight and drape of a fabric but is unsuitable in terms of aftercare of the product. If a centre wishes to apply decoration on to a product in this way they need to look at appropriate alternatives like screen printing, block printing or fabric paints, all of which allow for appropriate care of the fabric and would be covered within the development part of the folder.
- Three centres included pins in their work; some were used to attach swathes of fabric on to the garment which is unacceptable and unnecessary. One centre included a needle and thread hanging off the garment unsecured. Centres should be mindful when deciding whether it is appropriate to send something through the post or not, as objects such as pins could be deemed as dangerous to send via post.
- It is important to understand that the marks for the folder work and all three products have the same weighting of marks, therefore all segments are equally important i.e. All three products follow the same marking scheme and must be deemed equally important.

General Comments

- As incomplete and unfinished work is unlikely to access the higher band of marks it is important to be mindful of time constraints and the volume of work that needs to be undertaken.
- Folders need to be well presented, this is acknowledged in the marking scheme within the Evaluation section. When presenting the folder of work, it is important that pages are precise in order not to create bulky folders that include unnecessary work. (See Key messages).
- Photographic evidence, particularly within the development stage, is extremely important and is a method of communication which is to be encouraged.

ADMINISTRATION

- The majority of work was collated and labelled correctly, however a small handful of candidates' work was incorrectly labelled and not attached together, making it more difficult to moderate due to having to match folders and items up before assessment could begin.
- Due to the nature of the volume of the work, a large elastic band grouping one candidate's work together is helpful rather than a range of ribbons.
- Please ensure that the label is not stitched through the garment as it is then difficult to unfold.
- Many candidates continue to work in one folder with one main theme occurring throughout – this is a good use of time and materials and allows more time on the practical outcomes. In comparison, three separate folders with different themes does not allow the candidates to make the best use of their time.

RESEARCH, AIMS and ANALYSIS

- Research continues to be area in which the majority of candidates excel, being a pivotal part of the design process. It is, however, important to get the balance right between enough, too little or too much work. A good concise solid body of research which has taken too much time to create can result in the candidate being unable to complete the rest of the folder.
- The majority of folders show a good understanding of contemporary designers from a variety of cultures alongside existing products from high street stores. This part of the research is important in terms of the types of styles and fabrics that potentially could be used within the design element and final products.
- The 'Theme' is a major starting point within the research and a lot of thought needs to go into this part of the course. The 'Theme' needs to be chosen carefully alongside personal interests or inspiration and this needs to be substantial enough to be a basis for all three products.
- Folders that effectively link research, theme and ideas together, create stronger practical responses.

PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT

- There are many well executed design ideas which have been created using a variety of mediums. This can involve computer aided design, but it is important to ensure that clear annotation is used alongside this to further communicate these ideas and thought processes.

PROCESS – Carrying out the Coursework Tasks

- The folders continue to demonstrate a vast array of competent practical skills, linked with an abundance of creativity, which is to be actively encouraged.
- In order to access those higher marks, it is important to design and create well made products using a variety of appropriate fabrics which include a variety of embellishments where appropriate.
- Again; In order to access those higher marks it is important to present three significantly different products which demonstrate a variety of skills and techniques.
- Seams need to be finished in an appropriate manner, either overlapped/zig zagged or French-seamed. Pinking shears are not deemed a finishing technique and therefore may be misinterpreted as an example of poor time management.

REALISATION – Quality of the Outcome

- In order to produce three quality made products within a skills-set, each candidate must manage their time effectively to finish all items to a high standard.
- Candidates should utilise skilful textile techniques when completing their products, rather than adopting what could be considered as inappropriate practices, such as paint on fabric (see key messages).
- Shape and construction coupled with embellishment techniques need to be considered within the developmental stage in order for the candidate to respond with a quality outcome.

EVALUATION

- Evaluation has improved within the majority of the folders. It is important to continue to give it the time needed to continue strengthening this section.
- The evaluation section also encompasses the presentation of the folder, how it is organised and whether the work is logical and supported by sound evidence.

Candidates should continue to follow the points below:

- 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.

- How effective has the choice of techniques, materials, shape and size been? (this could be annotated within the folder as it develops).
- 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.