

Principal Assessor Report 2003

Assessment Panel:

Home Economics

Qualification area

**Subject(s) and Level(s)
Included in this report**

Fashion and Textile Technology Higher

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2002	48
Pre appeal	

Number of entries in 2003	72
Pre appeal	

General comments re entry numbers

The number of candidates presented in Fashion and Textile Technology has increased by 50 % this session.

In the session 2002-03 current centres who presented at Higher level:

Health & Food Technology: 130 centres

Fashion & Textile Technology: 12 centres

Lifestyle & Consumer Technology: 30 centres

Of the above, the number of centres offering two contexts were:

Lifestyle & Consumer Technology *plus* Health & Food Technology: 8 centres

Fashion & Textile Technology *plus* Health & Food Technology: 8 centres

Therefore there are 16 centres presenting in two contexts.

Only **one** centre offered Home Economics in all three contexts.

Grade boundaries at C, B and A for each subject area included in the report

Fashion and Textile Technology	
Grade	Minimum mark
C	75
B	90
A	105

General commentary on passmarks and grade boundaries

- While SQA aims to set examinations and create mark schemes which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum 50% of the available marks (notional passmark) and a very well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70%, it is almost impossible to get the standard absolutely on target every year, in every subject and level
- Each year we therefore hold a passmark meeting for each subject at each level where we bring together all the information available (statistical and judgmental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the senior management team at SQA
- We adjust the passmark downwards if there is evidence that we have set a slightly more demanding exam than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance
- We adjust the passmark upwards if there is evidence that we have set a slightly less demanding exam than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance
- Where the standard appears to be very similar to previous years, we maintain similar grade boundaries
- An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. And just because SQA has altered a boundary in a particular year in say Higher Chemistry does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related as they do not contain identical questions
- Our main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain standards across the years, even as syllabuses evolve and change

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

Standardised 'a priori' Boundary Grades were applied.

Question papers and their associated marking schemes are designed to be the required standard and to meet the assessment specification for the subject/level concerned.

For National courses the examination paper is set in order that a score of 50% of the total marks for all components merits a grade C (based on the grade descriptions for that grade), and similarly a score of 70% for a grade A.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Fashion and Textile Technology Technological Project 2003

General Comments

The changes to the format of the Technological Project seem to have been beneficial with candidates now being allocated marks for their work at the start of the Technological Projects. A number of centres still used the old project proforma and are reminded that they should use the most up to date version which can be downloaded from the SQA website at www.sqa.org.uk

Wording of Technological Project briefs seem to be clear with most of the candidates managing to identify the key points.

The general standard of scripts is improving with candidates work benefiting from support that has been made available from SQA.

A large number of the submissions are now word processed however there is no need to word-process Technological Projects and no marks are awarded for presentation. However when candidates use the PC to word process their projects they are reminded that there is a spell check/grammar check facility that can make their submission easier to understand. The highest proportion of time should be spent on the content and the process and not word processing.

The most popular brief was the one which focused on party wear for the teenage market.

Technological Project

Step 1.1 Identification of key points with explanation

It should be noted that this section requires the explanation of key points in terms of the wording of the brief but some candidates were giving straight dictionary definitions and therefore did not earn the marks. Generally well carried out and good marks gained. A few centres had not appreciated that marks were allocated for additional detail **and** for additional key points and therefore lost marks.

Step 1.2 Draw up appropriate criteria for a specification

Well done other than last section on measuring. Candidates do not seem to understand “measuring” because they list how each specification point can be investigated rather than measured. The method of measuring is the way that the candidates can check whether they have met the specification point once their product has been developed. Some candidates identified too many specification points, which then gave these candidates additional work at the end of the Technological Project and made it more difficult for them to earn all the marks. If the specification point is too complex it is may be too difficult to investigate in sufficient depth and then evaluate later in Step 4.1

Step 1.3 Devise an overall plan for investigation

Lack of depth in each investigation was common although this did not affect the final marks. However it made the investigation more difficult to follow and maybe this affected the candidates understanding. Order was sometimes not logical or appropriate. Candidates should check that they have identified investigations which take account of all areas of the specification.

Investigation techniques were sometimes not quantified with target group and therefore marks were lost. Visiting is not an investigation technique.

Justification should be linked to either the data collected or the technique used for the investigation. Still some evidence that final solution has already been decided by the candidate and that investigations have been engineered to achieve the solution.

Step 2

Step 2.1 Implement the overall plan for investigation

The area of investigations is still causing some problems although it is clear that candidates are more familiar with the requirement to collect data to allow the formulation of a solution. Now that the candidates should only carry out three investigations this area is more concise. However a number of centres are still allowing their candidates to carry out four investigations, which does disadvantage the candidates.

Where the plan for investigation was wordy candidates lost marks because they failed to complete all areas planned. The compiling of mood boards cannot be used as a investigation unless it is assessed or judged against set criteria e.g. the specification.

Aim

On occasion the aims were not carried out fully or the investigations planned changed by the time they were carried out and this made the candidates lose a number of marks. There is more evidence of pupils using information gained from one investigation and using it to narrow down the area for the following investigations making it easier to arrive at the proposed solution. Some investigation planned were too complicated to carry out.

Brief:

Some investigations were too brief and showed little depth of data. On occasions just results were provided. Some investigations were shallow, ie four questions in a questionnaire.

Candidates clearly spend a lot of time generating computer generated pie charts/star diagrams etc however if they fail to provide labels to explain the data they will lose marks. A good way to display results is in a chart providing headings are used.

Facts/Results

Occasionally blank questionnaires provided with no record of results therefore the findings are not clear. Candidates should be reminded that there should be a minimum of 20 questionnaires issued to ensure validity. If an expert is interviewed their title/area of expertise should be stated. In this context a number of candidates used websites to obtain data however the validity would have been improved if they had provided web site addresses.

Conclusions:

Very often general statements/summary of results were made which are not based on evidence provided in the investigation. Candidates show a limited ability to draw conclusions. This is an area that needs to be addressed.

Step 2.2 Derive a solution from the investigations

Most candidates correctly identified and then described in detail their solution, which showed some evidence of links to their results and conclusions from the investigations. These solutions often showed a high degree of creative flair which was encouraging to see.

Step 3

Step 3.1 Manufacture the chosen solution

Planned sequence of work

- ◆ Candidates need to take care that they follow the guidance provided and provide dates and times as instructed in the candidates guide. As period times vary between different centres actual times are required.
- ◆ Even although a textile item is being produced the manufacture should not take too long when the whole project is supposed to take only 20 hours.
- ◆ Evidence of some candidates writing their plans retrospectively.
- ◆ Plans lacked depth of detail and demonstrated little effective deployment of time therefore it would be difficult to manufacture the item successfully.

Identify and requisition all the resources and equipment required to manufacture the solution.

Requisitioning was poor - fabric was ordered but information such as type, length, width, and colour were omitted. Sizes of zips should be stated. However it is unnecessary to identify tables and waste baskets etc. Metric measurements are required but often imperial or American measurements were identified. Not all equipment identified/required was requisitioned. If an actual paper pattern is used the number should be identified. Types of scissors used should be identified. Justification was effective although repetitive.

Step 3.2 Devise two tests for the manufactured solution.

Generally planning for tests was acceptable. The most successful tests focused on the specification and took account of the methods of measuring identified in Step 1.2. Techniques identified were generally correct and made reference made in most cases to the target group. Justification tended to show an understanding of the reason for testing and the value of the information gained. Justification can also take account of the types of technique used to test the solution.

Step 3.3 Implement the tests for manufactured solution

Testing can cause problems. This was an area of weakness. It appeared that testing is sometimes carried out in a hurry and therefore lacked depth or validity.

Many of the points that were identified in the Step 2.1 also apply to this area. Often sensory testing accounted for one of the two tests but there was little indication of how the results were arrived at. Table of results provided but no key to explain results and therefore the work fails to gain marks.

Interviews provided the most valuable information when both questions and answers were provided. When candidates identified questions, which drew on the specification, detailed information was gained that could then be drawn on in the next section (evaluation).

Wearer trials by the candidate are not suitable method of testing because they involve personal opinion and therefore is not scientifically valid.

Step 4

Step 4.1 Evaluate the chosen solution

Although there is evidence that some candidates are improving their evaluation skills there are still some candidates providing statements rather than evaluation. Very often the results from the tests were ignored when writing up the evaluation and therefore claims were not supported by evidence in the tests. The candidate should take care to ensure that they make evaluative comments about each specification point. At least one of the specification points should be evaluated in detail to ensure that full marks for this section are obtained. Comments were often subjective or personal and were not backed up by evidence. When evaluating "cost effective" the candidate should provide evidence of costing to verify their evaluative comments.

Step 4.2 Review the Technological Project.

Although the candidates use the words 'time, skills and abilities, and resources', time was the most frequent heading used for the review however it often was not qualified by evidence found in the Technological Project. Some pupils used exemplar materials as a guide but what they wrote often was not linked to evidence in their own Technological Project.

General Observations on the Technological Project.

The most successful candidates in the Technological Project could understand the concept of measuring, carried out both sound investigations and tests and also provided evaluations, which made reference to the results of tests.

Some candidates provided Technological Projects with extra pages which were created when the candidates could not handle the downloaded proforma.

**Feedback on Fashion and Textile Technology Higher Paper
Section A**

1. **State two functions of clothing.** 1
◆ Well answered
2. **Identify two factors which affect colour choice.** 1
◆ Well answered
3. **Name two types of cutting tools used for textiles.** 1
◆ Poor response. No in-depth knowledge
4. **State two uses for hydrophilic fibres.** 1
◆ Some understanding shown
5. **Explain the term “analogous” in relation to colour.** 1
◆ Some understanding shown.
◆ Need to learn definition.
6. **What is a toile?** 1
◆ Not well understood
◆ Need to learn definition.
7. **Name, with date, the Act of Parliament which protects children against the sale of unsafe clothing.** 1
◆ Poor knowledge shown
8. **Explain the term “grading” in relation to patterns.** 1
◆ Good understanding shown
9. **State two psychological effects of clothing.** 1
◆ Good understanding shown
10. **Explain two ways in which culture can affect an individual’s choice of clothing.** 2
◆ Good understanding shown
11. **State one advantage and one disadvantage of the use of fleece fabric.** 2
◆ Better knowledge about advantages rather than disadvantages
12. **Explain the terms “scutching” and “carding” in relation to cotton manufacture.** 2
◆ Poor understanding of scutching in particular.
◆ Disappointing.
◆ Area of weakness.
13. **Give one advantage and one disadvantage of the use of tie and dye techniques.** 2
◆ Poorly answered
14. **Explain what is meant by “flow line” production** 2
◆ Often confused by candidates.
◆ Generally candidates did not score two marks for this question.

(20)

Feedback on Fashion and Textile Technology Higher Paper

Section B

Question 1

- a) **Identify and explain four fabric properties that should be considered for work wear for firefighters.** 6
- ◆ Good understanding shown of the properties required for clothing for firefighters.
 - ◆ Explanations were well linked to use in work situation and the circumstances they may encounter.
 - ◆ Candidates do not understand “flammability” — see explanation in “ Technology of Textile Properties” by Marjorie Taylor page 231
 - ◆ Some confusion between flammable and inflammable.
- b) **Evaluate the suitability of silk for special occasion wear.** 4
- ◆ Evaluation skills have improved but some candidates continue to make statements showing they have the knowledge but not the skill to translate the knowledge to exemplify the skill.
 - ◆ Good understanding of the properties of silk, which were well evaluated in relation to use as special occasion wear.
 - ◆ Some candidates just listed properties and did not evaluate.
- c) **Explain why the construction of knitted fabric makes it a suitable choice for leisurewear.** 4
- ◆ Some candidates confused knitted fabric and knitwear.
 - ◆ Candidates found it difficult to provide four reasons therefore had a lack of knowledge in this area.
 - ◆ Poor marks for this area.
- d) **Evaluate the suitability of applying dye to:**
- i) **fibres;**
 - ii) **garments.**
- when developing designs for street fashion.** 6
- ◆ Poorly answered.
 - ◆ Poor knowledge of application of dye to either fibres or garments demonstrated.
 - ◆ Little evaluative comment made in relation to street fashion. Answers should have used evaluative words.

(20)

Question 2

- a) **List and explain four factors to be considered when choosing textiles for nightwear.** 6
- ◆ Well answered.
 - ◆ Good understanding of properties of textiles required for nightwear
 - ◆ Answers well laid out.
- b) **Evaluate the suitability of a terry towelling dressing gown for an elderly person.** 4
- ◆ Generally well answered.
 - ◆ Most candidates found it easy to link their answers to the needs of the elderly. If answers were not linked to the elderly they did not score marks.
- c) **Explain the importance of dimensional stability of fabric.** 2
- ◆ Poor understanding of dimensional stability. This area was often omitted.
- d) **Explain the value to the consumer of the Trading Standards Department/Consumer Protection Department.** 4
- ◆ Lack of consumer knowledge. Answers not always linked to the ends of the consumer.
- e) **Evaluate the usefulness of the following labels to the consumer.** 4
- ◆ Some knowledge demonstrated however usefulness to the consumer not always evaluated.
 - ◆ Confusion between various wool labels.
 - ◆ Difficulty making two points about Eco label

(20)

Question 3

a) **Discuss the popularity of each of the following as methods of decoration:**

i) **beading**

ii) **embroidery**

4

- ◆ Candidates familiar with this area.
- ◆ Answers sometimes linked to articles for the home as well as garments.

b) **Identify and explain two general pressing operations used during garment construction.**

- ◆ Some understanding shown.

c) **Detail four ways in which fibre and fabric technological developments are being use to create a range of smart and modern textiles.** 4

- ◆ Poor understanding of smart textiles
- ◆ However candidates who did have knowledge of this area scored well.

d) **Evaluate the importance to the manufacturer of appropriate packaging for textile items.** 5

- ◆ Some understanding shown.
- ◆ Answers not always evaluative

e) **Discuss the advantages of Internet shopping.** 4

- ◆ Good understanding of advantages of Internet shopping

(20)

Question 4

- a) **List and explain four stages in a fashion cycle.** 6
- ◆ When candidates knew each of the stages of the fashion cycle they found this area straightforward. However it was essential that they knew the exact terminology for each stage.
- b) **Evaluate the use of data warehousing to the retailer.** 3
- ◆ Some understanding shown but full marks often not obtained.
 - ◆ Total gap in knowledge for some candidates
- c) **A textile manufacturer plans to develop a range of teenage bedroom accessories. Identify and explain four stages in the development and marketing of this range.** 6
- ◆ Candidates did not know all the stages of development.
 - ◆ Candidates should make sure they learn all the steps so that it can be applied to any situation.
 - ◆ Limited linkage to the development of teenage bedroom accessories.
 - ◆ Disappointing area.
- d) **Evaluate the use of laminated fabric for outdoor wear.** 3
- ◆ Limited understanding of laminated fabrics
 - ◆ Answers not evaluated.
- e) **Explain the use of anti-pilling finishes to fabrics.** 2
- ◆ Well answered

(20)

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Overall there was an obvious improvement in the way that candidates had been prepared for the examination.

Technological Project

Step 1 of the Technological Project was carried out well.

Written Paper

Improvement in answers in Section A of question paper. There was an overall improvement in the preparation of the candidates for this section however there is still a need to practice this section and learn key facts, terminology and definitions.

Candidates who demonstrated good answering technique tended to score the best marks.
Section B Question 1 was well answered.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

Technological Project

- ◆ Measuring
- ◆ Investigations
- ◆ Testing
- ◆ Evaluating

Written paper

Knowledge

- ◆ Dimensional stability of textiles
- ◆ Smart and modern fabrics
- ◆ Cutting tools
- ◆ Toile
- ◆ Areas of consumer education, in particular the Acts and organisations.
- ◆ Applying dye to either fibres or garments

Evaluation

Evaluation skills have improved but some candidates continue to make statements showing they have knowledge but not the skill to translate the knowledge to exemplify the skill.
Centres need to use the Evaluation Skills packs to further develop this skill.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

See detailed comments provided on Pages 4–13.

Technological Project

- ◆ Centres must make sure they are using the up to date proforma for their submission.
- ◆ Teach correct approach to investigations through investigative work before starting the Technological Project.

Written paper

- ◆ Candidates should continue to practice evaluation style answers using the Evaluation Skills pack which was first issued in March 2002 and the various updates.
- ◆ Practice Section A style questions
- ◆ Practice Section B Question 1 areas of course content.
- ◆ Teachers should make sure they are using the most up-to-date course content grids.
- ◆ Candidates who have been well prepared in answering technique tended to score well.