

Principal Assessor Report 2004

Assessment Panel:

Home Economics

Qualification area

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

**Home Economics:
Fashion and Textile Technology - Higher**

Statistical information: update

Number of entries in 2003	73
Number of entries in 2004	82

General comments re entry numbers

The total of centres presenting candidates for Higher Home Economics examinations was 158.

Number of centres presenting higher home economics:

Health & Food Technology: 118

Fashion & Textile Technology: 12

Lifestyle & Consumer Technology: 29

Centres offering two contexts:

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology *plus* Health and Food Technology : 5

Fashion & Textile Technology *plus* Health and Food Technology: 5

This session no centres presented in all three contexts.

It was positive to see there were a number of centres presenting Higher for the first time.

Health and Food Technology: 11

Lifestyle and Consumer Technology: 6

Fashion and Textile Technology: 2

The number of candidates presented in Fashion & Textile Technology has shown a slight increase and therefore maintains the slight trend in growth from previous years.

Statistical Information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of awards

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates
A	3.7	3.7	3
B	13.4	17.1	11
C	31.7	48.8	26
D	19.5	68.3	16
No award	31.7	100.0	26

Comments on any significant changes in percentages or distribution of awards

- Candidates did not perform as well as last session however they did still perform better than the previous presentation years.

Grade boundaries for each subject area included in the report

Distribution of awards	%	Cum %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
A	3.7	3.7	3	105
B	13.4	17.1	11	90
C	31.7	48.8	26	75
D	19.5	68.3	16	67
No award	31.7	100.0	26	

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 arrangements evolve and change.

Comments on grade boundaries for each subject area

Standardised 'a priori' Boundary Grades were set this year.

Question papers and their associated marking instructions are designed to be at 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 grade A.

Comments on candidate performance

General comments

Technological Project

General observations

Brief 1 – Develop a storage item using textiles to be included in a retailers range for children.

Brief 2 – Produce a textile item which uses the property of insulation to be sold in a high street store.

Word processing

Given the number of technological projects that were word processed the spelling and grammar had a number of mistakes. Sentence construction and spelling was often remarked as being poor. Candidates should be reminded about the spell/grammar check facility available on PCs. There is a need for candidates to proof read their technological projects prior to submission.

The use of rainbow fonts throughout the work or pale coloured ink for printing should be discouraged as it makes it difficult for markers to read the work.

Additional General Points

Candidates should know the dietary targets in detail as an area of course content at Higher and therefore there should be no need to investigate this area.

Step 1.1 Identification of the key points

- The correct wording has to be given to candidates or they will be disadvantaged. Omitting one word penalises candidates.
- Generally key points were well identified although some candidates failed to identify an additional key point and therefore lost one mark.
- Some candidates provided up to 6 additional key points. This makes it more difficult for candidates to earn all the marks at the next step.
- Explanations should show understanding of their importance in relation to the wording of the brief. Although only brief explanations are required candidates who gave slightly more information seemed to have a clearer understanding of the complexity of the work.
- A few candidates are still giving dictionary definitions which are not acceptable.

Step 1.2 Appropriate criteria for the specification

- Candidates should take care to ensure that they are not using the exact wording from the brief in the development of their specification points. They gain more marks if they provide more detail than the brief.
- Note: for Higher a five points specification is required. Full marks cannot be gained if a four point specification is provided.
- If a specification point is identified in relation to cost the candidate will need to carry out a costing exercise as a method of measuring or testing. Often the candidates fail to do this.
- A specification point should be worded correctly e.g. ‘must contain a rich source of iron’; ‘be aesthetically appealing to teenagers’ etc.
- Specifications which were more specific to the key points allowed the candidates to keep focused and allowed more suitable solutions to be devised.
- Some candidates are confused between dietary targets and nutrition.
- Some candidates provided a specification which contained too many specification points and therefore meant they gave themselves additional work and possibly lost marks.
- Explanations can occasionally be weak. They should provide some reasoning which takes account of the key points.
- A number of candidates omitted ‘links to the key points’ because they did not know how to complete it.
- Measuring is still an area of weakness. Candidates are identifying investigations and not tests. Measuring is a way of testing whether the specification point has been met. The target group or expert who is going to be used to carry out the testing should be identified.

Step 1.3 Overall plan for investigations

- Candidates should be reminded that the purpose of the plan is to allow them to carry out a series of investigations, to collect data to allow, then develop a solution that meets their specification. Therefore the investigations should be developed from the specification. Sometimes not all the specification points were covered.

- There should be at least five investigations in the plan at Higher.
- Some candidates produced less than five and therefore lost marks.
- There should be a clear aim for each investigation.
- The technique should be identified briefly but must identify the target group or details of the expert used to collect the data.
- Justifications were often general, did not focus clearly on the investigation and were lacking in depth. Justification can be provided in terms of the choice of investigation or technique selected.
- Page 8 is very important. The candidate must clearly identify the three investigations selected. The wording of these aims is used at the next stage of marking.

Step 2.1 Implement the overall plan for investigation

Investigations are marked on the following areas:

Aim:

- Has the candidate achieved their aim as stated on page 8? Many candidates fail to do everything they plan and therefore lose marks.

Brief, concise and easy to interpret.

- The results should fit into one page and be easy to understand. Where bar charts etc are used they should have keys and scales clearly identified. Reducing the size of the font to make the work fit into the page should be avoided.

Fashion technological projects

Validity of results

- A number of candidates lost marks because the investigations are not valid. They should state the website that they have used and the title of the person that they interviewed. Questionnaires should involve 20 people. On occasion work is not relevant to the brief. A number of candidates have provided summaries of their work, therefore there is no evidence of the work and the marker cannot give credit for validity of results.

Conclusions

- Conclusions can only be drawn on evidence that has been recorded as evidence in the investigation.
- Conclusions should record the findings that are relevant to the final solution. Conclusions should be based on results and not involve personal opinion. A number of candidates failed to draw conclusions and just repeated the results and so this is an area of weakness.
- The most able candidates used the results of one investigation to narrow down the area of the investigation for the subsequent investigations.

Number of investigations

- The candidate is only required to carry out three investigations although they can choose to carry out less than three if they wish. However candidates who choose to carry out more than three will find in future that the additional investigations will not be marked.

Presentation

- Some candidates used ICT to present the results of investigations which caused difficulties when interpreting results. Where ICT is used tables, charts etc should provide a key and be easy to understand.

Step 2.2 Derive a solution from the investigations

- The candidate should be able to examine the **three** conclusions from their investigations and then come up with the solution. There are still candidates who are not linking their chosen solution to the investigation results.
- A number of centres allowed their candidates to propose and test more than one version of a solution. This is not permitted. The candidate must only derive **one** solution.
- Assuming that the candidates were working on this technological project independently it is surprising that in some centres all the candidates were producing similar solutions.
- In textile based solutions the markers would like to see an indication of the dimensions and types of materials/trimmings etc selected. Samples of materials could be included. Some candidates produced some very clear illustrations of their proposed solution.

Step 3.1 Manufacture the chosen solution

Time plans did not always contain dates, timing of lessons and duration of processes to manufacture the solution. There was insufficient breakdown of times and this area needs to be addressed. Some candidates produced a general plan rather than a plan for manufacture.

- Resource lists frequently omitted types and colours of fabric, width and lengths of fabric.
- Candidates working with textiles should identify the correct type of scissors.

Step 3.2 Derive tests for the manufactured solution

The planned tests should allow an objective assessment of the manufactured item against some or all of the specification points. When using an expert to test the success of the finished item the title of the expert should be specified e.g. retailer in a children's toy shop etc.

Step 3.3 Implement the tests for the manufactured solution

Questions used in testing were often weak and lacked sufficient depth to obtain constructive comments and feedback that would suggest possible areas for modification. Occasionally summaries of results were displayed with no information on how the averages were arrived at. Some results such as pie charts were not quantified.

- Depth at testing allows the candidate to write a more detailed evaluation against each specification point.
- Some candidates showed more understanding of testing as they had had previous experience with carrying out investigations.

Step 4.1 Evaluation

- Candidates lost marks because they offered personal opinion on the success of their solution. They are required to provide an evaluation based on evidence that can be found in the technological project either through the results of testing or possibility even their investigations.
- Candidates should be encouraged to use the evaluation words.
- Evaluations were brief and few candidates managed to earn the additional mark for detail.

Step 4.2 Review

Centres are reminded that each step of the technological project should be reviewed using evidence in the work of the technological project and making use of skills and abilities, time and resources.

- Step 1.3 and step 3.2 often contained a review of carrying out the plan rather than a review of implementing the plan.
- Candidates often made general sweeping statements that could not be backed up by evidence in their Technological Project. They are reminded that they are asked to review their ability to carry out their technological project.

Fashion And Textile Technology Paper 2004

Section A

- 1. Name the two threads used in the weaving process.** 1
 - A large number found this easy however a surprising number got this wrong.
- 2. Name two religions that influence choice of clothing** 1
 - Well answered
- 3. Name two different twill weave fabrics.** 1
 - Few candidates obtained full marks
- 4. State two properties of polyamide.** 1
 - Poorly answered
- 5. State two effects produced by smart textiles.** 1
 - Poorly answered
- 6. What does the abbreviation CAB stand for?** 1
 - Confused
- 7. Explain the term lay planning.** 1
 - Some understanding shown
- 8. Explain the term narrow fabrics.** 1
 - Poorly answered
- 9. Give two advantages of using knitted cotton for baby wear.** 2
 - Candidates must remember and link their answers to the content i.e. the use with the baby
- 10. State two ways the Advertising Standards Authority protects the consumer.** 2
 - Few candidates obtained full marks
- 11. Give one advantage and one disadvantage of elastomeric fabrics.**
 - Well answered
- 12. Explain the terms**
 - a) job production and
 - b) batch production. 2
 - poorly explained, lack of subject specific knowledge
- 13. Give one advantage and one disadvantage of weft knit fabrics.** 2
 - good understanding shown
- 14. Explain two effects of calendaring on fabrics.** 2
 - very few candidates demonstrated knowledge

Section B

Note: Question 1 is compulsory and comes from an identified area of the course content and therefore candidates can be prepared for this area of questioning.

- 1a) Identify and explain four of the stages in the production of wool.** 6
- Poor understanding of each of the stages involved in the production of wool.
 - A number of candidates left this area blank and did not even attempt to answer.
 - Some evidence that candidates had not been taught the required answering technique for this type of question.
- b) Explain the difference between the worsted process and the woollen process in wool yarn production.** 3
- Confusion between the length of fibres for woollen and worsted fabrics although candidates correctly identified their use.
 - A number left this area blank.
- c) Identify and explain two technological advances which have improved wool products.** 3
- a number of candidates guessed the technological developments and therefore gained no marks
- d) Evaluate the use of each of the following chemical finishes.**
- (i) anti bacterial finishes**
- (ii) flame proofing** 4
- Candidates gave one point rather than two points about each chemical finish.
 - Information was not linked to a use as required in the question.
- e) The label below is attached to an airline uniform.**
- Evaluate the suitability of the fabric properties for an airline uniform.** 4
- Some facts known about the properties of silk and cotton but they were not evaluated in terms of use in an airline uniform.
 - Candidates need to know the properties of these fabrics before they can answer evaluation type of questions.
- 2a) Identify and explain four factors which could affect the choice of clothing for teenagers.** 6
- Well answered. Good understanding demonstrated
 - This type of question where candidates had to identify and the explain factors was generally well answered.
- b) Explain the value to the designer of a mood board.** 3
- Most pupils scored a mark although few pupils gained all marks
- c) Evaluate the use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) to a producer of fashion clothing** 4
- Good understanding of CAD.
 - Pupils lost marks because they didn't write enough to earn the marks or because they failed to evaluate.
- d) Evaluate the protection provided to the consumer by the Sale and Supply of Good Act 1994** 3
- Poorly answered because candidates did not know the terms of the Sale and Supply Act
 - Poor skills of evaluation
- e) Explain how the following textiles assist medical staff** 4
- (i) breathable membranes**
- (ii) bonded fabrics**
- Some good work with candidates linking well to the use of these textiles in the medical profession.
 - Candidates who failed to link to the medical profession lost marks.
- 3a) Identify and explain two ways of applying colour to large quantities of fabrics in industry.** 3
- Poorly answered.
 - Little technological/industrial knowledge of this area.
- b) Identify and explain four factors which influence the colour choice of textiles.** 6
- Well answered
- c) The following marketing plan has been adopted by a class producing holdalls from recycled denim.**
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.** 4
- Candidates chose to make general comments on the plan rather than evaluate each stage of the plan in terms of marketing this particular product.
- d) A retailer is planning to use a well known personality to promote a range of sportswear.**
- Evaluate this method of promotion.** 4
- Candidates failed to provide sufficient points to earn the four marks
 - They should be reminded that evaluations can make both positive and negative points.

- Candidates who made reference to a specific sports personality tended to find this question easier to answer.

e) Explain why many charities use T-shirts as a method of promoting their cause. 3

- Some candidates who linked the use of T-shirts to a particular charity could explain why this was a beneficial.
- Often candidates failed to provide enough points.

Question 4

This was the least popular question.

a) Identify and explain four features of microfibrils which make them suitable for outdoor use. 6

- Few candidates managed to obtain full marks due to their lack of knowledge about microfibrils

b) Evaluate the value of lyocell in the protection of the environment. 3

- Little understanding shown.

c) A high street store has introduced a range of designer clothing. Evaluate this initiative. 4

- Lack of evaluation skills.
- Candidates could not relate to designer clothing.

d) Explain three uses of novelty yarns in the textiles industry. 3

- Some understanding shown with some answers linked well to accessories and soft toys.

e) Explain the importance to the consumer of:

(i) Mail Order Traders Association (MOTA)

(ii) British Standards Institution (BSI) Kitemark 4

- Area of weakness.
- Answers not linked to the consumer.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates performed well

Candidates produced some creative solutions for the technological project showing creatively and good practical skills.

Areas of external assessment in which candidates had difficulty

General points about the fabric paper

Answering technique needs to be taught to pupils.

Evaluation questions need to be practiced.

Pupils need to learn the EK before it can be recalled and correctly demonstrated in an examination.

Candidates should use paper questions for Section A to be prepared for the examination.

Recommendations

Feedback to centres

Paper Construction

Teachers should be familiar with the composition of the written paper and take this into account when constructing prelims and in preparing candidates for the examination.

Fashion and Textile Technology

Resource Management 50-60 marks

Consumer Studies 20-30 marks

To meet the 80 marks question paper allocation.

Section B Question 1 is a compulsory question and assesses 20 marks from Resource Management, in a specified area of the course content.

Answering technique

If candidates could implement the following guidance when answering their marks may be improved if backed up by application of subject specific knowledge.

- Number each point when answering questions so that the candidates know they have written sufficient. This applies to both evaluation and knowledge based questions.
- Factor and explanation questions could have the factor numbered on one line and then the explanation on the following lines.
- Explanation should be sufficient to earn one mark at Higher, remembering that no half marks are available for explanations that lack detail.