



Course report 2019

Subject	Fashion and Textile Technology
Level	National 5

This report provides information on candidates' performance. Teachers, lecturers and assessors may find it useful when preparing candidates for future assessment. The report is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any post-results services.

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Question paper

There were no significant changes to the course assessment in 2019.

The question paper performed in line with expectations. Feedback from the marking team and centres suggests that it was fair in terms of coverage and overall level of demand. The marking team have indicated an improvement in candidates' answering technique, but this did highlight a lack of knowledge in some key areas.

Assignment and practical activity

The assignment candidate workbook had been amended slightly this session to help candidates organise their work in a better way, specifically in section 1c (justification). This did result in better marks for this section, however there were a significant number of candidates who failed to investigate both key areas of the briefs and thus, limited the marks they were able to access later in the assignment.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Question paper

Question 1(a): Many candidates could name two methods of disposing of fullness.

Question 1(b): In general, candidates could correctly identify characteristics of polyester.

Question 1(c): Many candidates could identify at least two of the four pattern markings.

Question 2: Most candidates could correctly describe three features that would be important in the design of the cushion.

Question 3(a): Many candidates accessed most of the marks for this question by correctly explaining the properties of a knitted fabric linked to the coatigan.

Question 3(b): Most candidates who had worked with a knitted fabric, could correctly explain why a ball point needle and zig zag would be used.

Assignment and practical activity

Section 1(a): Most candidates identified two themes correctly.

Section 1(b): Most candidates carried out three investigations and many found key points of information to move the solution forward.

Section 1(c): Presentation of solution was done well in most cases. Inclusion of a grid for justification allowed many candidates to organise their thoughts more effectively and therefore access more of the marks available for this section.

Section 1(d): Many candidates wrote effective time plans, with fewer retrospective time plans being seen by markers this year.

Section 1(e): Requisitions — most candidates gave the required level of detail in this section.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Question paper

Question 1(a) Many candidates could name methods of disposing of fullness but failed to adequately explain how this would dispose of fullness on this item, and therefore, failed to gain marks.

Question 1(b): In general, candidates could identify properties and characteristics of polyester but failed to adequately evaluate them in relation to use in the top.

Question 1(c): Only a limited number of candidates could correctly identify all four pattern markings and some failed to identify the basic markings, for example notches and straight of grain line.

Question 2: Most candidates could correctly describe three features that would be important in the design of the cushion, but found providing an explanation as to why it was suitable for a cushion more difficult, for example if the candidate stated that ‘the fastening would open to allow easy removal of filling for washing’, this would not be awarded a mark as the candidate is talking about the function of the fastening. However, if the candidate mentioned ‘a concealed zip would be comfortable to lie on as the teeth and pull of the zip would be covered’, or that ‘buttons could provide a contrast in colour’, these would be awarded marks as they explain how the fastening affects the design of the cushion.

Question 2(b): Some candidates confused environmental checks with animal welfare issues or Fairtrade.

Question 2(c): Candidates could correctly identify ways in which they could reduce water/electricity usage, but failed to explain how this impacted upon the environment.

Question 3(a): Some candidates identified singular items which had recently appeared in fashion, but these were too limited in scope to be regarded as a trend, for example puffer jackets. When explaining how the trend could influence the development of a new collection, some candidates failed to adequately explain how the features of this trend could be incorporated into an item for the collection.

Question 3(b): Some candidates assumed that a knitted fabric would be wool, and discussed the properties of wool rather than knitted fabric construction.

Question 3(c): Many candidates confused zig zag stitching as an edge finish, rather than as a stitch type which would allow the fabric to stretch.

Assignment and practical activity

Section 1(b): All candidates carried out three investigations, but many failed to link these to both key themes making it difficult to access the full range of marks in later stages. There were instances of all candidates from a centre doing very similar investigations. Whilst this can happen, centres should ensure that each investigation is the candidate’s own work.

Section 1(d): Some candidates wrote their time plans using class periods — this makes it too large to be an effective plan, and limits the candidate’s ability to gain marks.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Question paper

Candidates should be given more experience of answering exam-style questions, specifically evaluation, describe and explain type questions, which caused many candidates difficulty.

Candidates should be encouraged to read and use the scenario information at the beginning of a question. This will ensure that the candidates effectively relate their responses back to the context of the question.

Candidates should also be encouraged to understand the features and characteristics of fibres, which can be different from those of fabrics. Candidates must also be aware of the features of a fibre or fabric, for example 'comfortable', 'ease of care' are not features. 'Absorbent', 'soft' or 'crease resistant' are properties.

Centres should ensure they use the skills, knowledge and understanding guidance found in the National 5 Fashion and Textile Technology course specification to make sure they cover all course content.

Assignment and practical activity

Centres should encourage candidates to think about what information is required from the three investigations. Candidates should be encouraged to investigate both key areas of the brief as well as construction techniques and/or properties of fabrics, as many candidates struggle to achieve marks for justifying these features.

Candidates should be encouraged to write the points of information found from each investigation separately so that clear progression of findings can be seen.

Section 1(d): Centres should ensure that candidates use appropriate time allocations for each step, rather than grouping activities together into period time slots. Each step should be timed individually and realistically, and should not be a copy of the pattern instructions, as this shows no understanding of the processes.

Section 2 — practical activity — making the item: this is the section candidates seem to prefer and spend most time on. Candidates should ensure that their item does contain eight construction techniques of sufficient challenge to meet the national standard, before they finalise their choice of item.

Section 3 — Evaluation section 3(a): after completing the test, candidates should be encouraged to write points of information, which can then be used in evaluations 3b and 3(c). These should not use averages, but refer to actual results.

Section 3(b): When evaluating their items, candidates should be encouraged to make use of, and refer to, the evidence from their test, in order to support their evaluative comments. The use of expressions such as 'therefore' or 'and so' may be useful triggers for candidates to develop their results into evaluative points.

Section 3(c): When evaluating their items, candidates should be encouraged to make use of, and refer to, the evidence from their investigations, solutions, time plan and/or tests, in order to support their evaluative comments. The use of expressions such as 'therefore' or 'and so' may be useful triggers for candidates to develop their results into evaluative points.

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2018	444
Number of resulted entries in 2019	382

Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of course awards	Percentage	Cumulative %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum mark				
A	12.3%	12.3%	47	70
B	22.0%	34.3%	84	60
C	24.6%	58.9%	94	50
D	22.5%	81.4%	86	40
No award	18.6%	-	71	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.

SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions that allow:

- ◆ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary)
- ◆ a well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary)

It is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.

Therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting every year for each subject at each level to bring together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The principal assessor and SQA qualifications manager meet with the relevant SQA head of service and statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. Members of the SQA management team chair these meetings. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper has been more, or less, challenging than usual.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper is more challenging than usual.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Grade boundaries from question papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year to year. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for question papers set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the question papers that they set themselves.