



## Common questions about National 3, National 4, National 5 and Higher Fashion and Textile Technology

### Can assessors create their own briefs for the National 5/Higher assignment and practical activity?

No. Candidates must use one of the briefs, which will be published annually and provided separately in the *Assignment and Practical Activity Assessment Task Briefs* document, as the basis for their assignment and practical activity. These documents are available on SQA's secure website and can be accessed through your SQA co-ordinator.

### What changes have been made to the National 5 Fashion and Textile Technology documents?

A new set of documents has been published to support the changes to assessment in the National 5 course. These can be found on the National 5 [Fashion and Textile Technology subject page](#) of SQA's website:

Document	Contents
Course specification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Skills, knowledge and understanding</li><li>◆ Structure of the course assessment</li><li>◆ Assessment conditions</li><li>◆ Appendix: course support notes</li><li>◆ Suggested learning and teaching activities</li><li>◆ Suggested resources</li></ul>
Coursework assessment task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Details of the task</li><li>◆ Marking instructions</li></ul>
Specimen question paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Sample questions</li><li>◆ Marking instructions</li></ul>

The documents for National 3, National 4 and Higher remain unchanged and can be found on the [Fashion and Textile Technology subject pages](#) of SQA's website:

<b>SQA website</b> <b>Fashion and Textile Technology subject page</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Coursework general assessment information</li> <li>◆ common questions</li> <li>◆ subject updates</li> <li>◆ course specifications</li> <li>◆ unit specifications</li> <li>◆ course and unit support notes</li> </ul>
<b>SQA's secure website</b> <b>Fashion and Textile Technology subject page</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ unit assessment support packs</li> <li>◆ coursework assessment tasks</li> <li>◆ coursework assessment briefs</li> </ul>

Please note, the latest versions of all documents can be found on SQA's [website](#). Documents on SQA's secure website must be accessed via your SQA co-ordinator.

### **If a design brief does not identify a specific target market, is it appropriate for candidates to identify this at the outset?**

All design briefs will include a target market. However, in some briefs this may be open to interpretation eg 'for sale in a gift shop'. In these cases, a candidate could choose an appropriate target group at the outset, or may decide on a target group as a result of their research. However, when candidates choose a target market, it should be appropriate to the brief and should not restrict the range of possible solutions.

### **Can candidates use their teacher as an 'expert' for their investigations?**

Candidates should always use an interviewee whose expertise is appropriate to the focus for the research. This could be their teacher if the teacher has the relevant expertise and insight for the area that is being investigated. A fashion and textile technology teacher would, for example, have expert knowledge on the properties and characteristics of textiles and construction techniques. However, they might not have the relevant expertise required to answer specific questions on areas such as the preferences of teenagers or the types of item that might sell well in a retail store. Further guidance is given in the National 5 Fashion and Textile Technology Course Specification Appendix 6: Guidance on research techniques (page 46), and Higher Fashion and Textile Technology Course Support Notes.

### **How should websites be referenced for investigations?**

Candidates should provide the website URL for the source of the data used. There should be sufficient detail to allow the appropriate web page to be accessed by a third party, ie the assessor.

### **How varied should investigations be? Can candidates do investigations in the same order, eg interview, internet search, then questionnaire?**

Candidates are carrying out a technological process, and may be using different briefs. As candidates should be encouraged to choose their own methods of research and sources of

information, it is expected that each candidate's range of investigations and the order in which they carry them out would be unique to their assignment.

### **How many sources should be used to ensure a valid investigation?**

A range of different investigations can be carried out using a wide range of possible sources. The numbers of sources need to support the investigation so candidates can gather enough relevant data to be able to fully summarise the main points of information. Detailed information on the number of sources for each technique can be found in the National 5 Course Specification: Appendix 6, and Higher Course Support Notes — Appendix 5.

### **A number of my candidates have chosen to make the same item. Is this acceptable if there is enough personalisation and choice?**

The technological aspects of this qualification require candidates to make a fashion/textile item to meet the needs of a given brief.

Candidates should not decide on their solution before the research has been carried out, as the solution should be based on the results of research. Candidates need to carry out three investigations into themes from the brief that they have identified for themselves. It would be expected that candidates would choose to research different aspects of the themes. Consequently, results arising from candidates' investigations make it unlikely that candidates arrive at exactly the same solution.

Further guidance is given in the 'Assessment conditions' section of the National 5 Fashion and Textile Technology Course Specification (page 10) and the Higher Fashion and Textile Technology Course Assessment Specification (page 7).

### **If a candidate uses a different style of hem than that used in the pattern for the course assessment, would this be marked as incorrect?**

Assessors can refer to a pattern that a candidate has used to see if they have made the item in a logical way. However, candidates may choose to alter the pattern or adapt aspects of the item to gain extra marks by choosing a higher tariff technique and executing these to the highest standard. Candidates should be awarded the marks for the construction technique carried out, as detailed in the marking instructions in the National 5 and Higher coursework assessment task documents.

### **How should marks be awarded for construction techniques?**

Each construction technique carries a mark tariff which reflects the degree of difficulty involved in carrying out the technique. To achieve the rigour of each level, the assessment requires the candidate to carry out a prescribed number of techniques which demonstrate a particular degree of difficulty.

Marks for each construction technique will be awarded holistically, taking into consideration all of the criteria required for the technique. Details of this can be found in the National 5 and Higher coursework assessment task documents. Assessors should use professional judgement based on the information in the marking instructions when considering how accurately each construction technique is completed and award marks for each technique appropriately.

Example — how a higher level candidate might be awarded marks for insertion of a semi-concealed zip:

- ◆ This technique has the potential to achieve 4 marks:

The candidate inserts the zip with the top edges even, the zip is placed accurately behind the opening, the stitching is straight and is an equal distance from the slider at each side, but is too close to the slider, so it does not move easily. This candidate would holistically be awarded 3 out of the 4 marks for the quality of the construction technique completed.

Marks should be allocated in descending order:

- ◆ construction techniques which carry the highest tariffs first, followed by the construction techniques which carry the next highest tariff and so on, until the full marks available have been reached
- ◆ a maximum of 21 marks will be awarded to candidates who do not achieve the minimum number of techniques

It is likely that textile items made for a course assessment at all levels will have more than the required number of construction techniques. Where candidates choose to incorporate more than eight techniques in their item, techniques carried out beyond the eight techniques required for assessment will not be awarded marks.

Candidates should be encouraged to select techniques from a range of different sections within the 'construction techniques marking tariff', allowing candidates to demonstrate a wider understanding and support developments throughout the course assessment.

Details for marking construction techniques, which take account of the number of techniques carried out by the candidate, can be found in the coursework assessment task.

## **How should construction techniques be marked if they are not in the marking tariff grid?**

The marking tariff grid exemplifies the criteria for a selection of construction techniques, and should be used as a guide for allocating marks to the construction techniques demonstrated by the candidate. If a candidate attempts a technique not detailed in the grid, teachers should find a similar technique with a similar degree of difficulty and award marks in line with this.

## **How much input can an assessor have into a candidate's plan?**

The assessment conditions for the assessment task state that 'assessor input and advice on the candidate's plan is acceptable in order to allow the candidate to progress to the next stages of the assessment'. Once the candidate has made their plan, it should be marked by the assessor and copied. Once the candidate's mark has been recorded, to ensure the item chosen allows candidates to access all the marks available for manufacture, subsequent support could include advising candidates on appropriate complexity of the item they plan to make, in relation to their chosen brief.

## **Do candidates have to use commercial paper patterns?**

Candidates don't have to use what is traditionally regarded as a commercial paper pattern. Although it is perfectly acceptable to use one, candidates are free to use patterns downloaded from the internet, patterns from magazines and other publications, patterns they have drafted themselves, or patterns from any other appropriate source.

## **Does every candidate have to use their own paper pattern?**

Candidates should have an appropriate paper pattern for them to use while making the item, but it does not have to be for their exclusive use.

## **Should centres retain garments/textile items as evidence or are photographs acceptable?**

To facilitate external verification activities, centres must retain candidate assessment evidence until the end of the academic session. Assessment evidence must be stored securely, in a retrievable format and made available to the team leader visiting verifier on request. This applies to all levels, including National 3, National 4 and Higher Units and all Coursework.

For further information please see the ['Evidence required for external verification of Units'](#) document, which can be found on SQA's website.

## **Are candidates allowed to carry out practical tasks at home or elsewhere if their centre does not have a particular piece of equipment, eg a computerised machine for embroidery?**

No, this would not be acceptable. National 5 and Higher documents state that Stage 2: Making the fashion/textile item will be conducted under the direct supervision of the assessor.

## **Do candidates always have to produce garments — is it acceptable to make accessories or home furnishings?**

The term 'fashion/textile item' is used in all assessment documentation. Candidates are therefore free to make any item that meets the needs of the assessment brief and so any suitable constructed fabric item will be acceptable.

Centre should ensure that any items made include at least eight processes, and look for the standards of quality outlined in the guidance documents.

## **Can candidates include A3 mood boards/story boards/solution pages with our course assessment for the assignment?**

Yes. Candidates are asked to 'Present and justify an appropriate solution for a fashion/textile item based on the information'. Evidence of the candidate's design for the planned fashion/textile item should be enclosed for submission; therefore, candidates may wish to illustrate their final design in one of these formats.

## **How much detail is required in the solution page of the Higher/National 5 coursework assessment task?**

It is expected that the following details are clearly shown on the solution page:

- ◆ An illustration of the fashion/textile item, so that the item is able to be clearly visualised. This description might be a labelled diagram, a computer-generated image, include samples of fabrics and components, a written commentary, or a combination of these.

This information will assist both the candidate and assessors to clearly visualise the proposed solution.

## **Can the unit assessment in the support pack be amended before use?**

All unit assessment support packs are produced in Word format. This enables a centre to alter the layout of the assessment to suit their candidates, eg to allow more space for candidate responses. However, if the method used by candidates to provide evidence for the assessment standards is altered, then this should be prior verified before use.

National Qualification questions and answers can be found on the [frequently asked questions section](#) of SQA's website.

Questions and answers on the changes to National Courses can be found at [www.sqa.org.uk/nqchanges](http://www.sqa.org.uk/nqchanges)