



## Course Report 2017

Subject	Fashion and Textile Technology
Level	National 5

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future assessment. It 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.

## Section 1: Comments on the assessment

### Component: Practical activity

The internally-assessed course assessments at National 5 showed increasing confidence by centres regarding the assessment criteria, and the projects tackled by candidates.

The reviewed marking instructions for the practical element have, to some extent, had the desired impact on the marks for this section, preventing candidates from being awarded overly high marks.

There is still some concern that centres may not be fully and correctly applying the marking instructions, and that some construction techniques may be being incorrectly identified. This will be addressed through Understanding Standards events and materials.

## Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

### Areas in which candidates performed well

#### Component: Practical activity

**Section 1(b):** Candidates appeared to perform well in identifying areas to research. The favoured methods of research tended to be questionnaires to their peer group and internet research. Many investigations were well presented and clearly laid out, with mood-board style presentations being very popular.

**Section 2(b) and (c):** Many candidates focused on the creation of their textile item as the most important part of the activity, and it tends to be the most time consuming. A good range of items were observed, with candidates clearly being allowed personalisation and choice by most centres. The construction techniques showed a good range, and a variety of abilities and skills were demonstrated. Many items showed creativity and imagination and most were finished to a very good standard.

**Section 3(a):** Candidates generally performed well at testing their finished item, with the most popular tests being sensory analyses by their peer group, or interviewing an 'expert'.

### Areas which candidates found demanding

#### Component: Practical activity

**Section 1(b):** Many candidates presented very detailed investigations, with a lot of information being offered. However, there was some weakness in drawing conclusions from the information they had found, and linking it to the textile item to be made.

**Section 1(c):** In presenting their solutions, many candidates struggled to present information in a format that meant their solution could be visualised. Some also struggled to link the design features of their item to their earlier research.

**Section 2(a):** Creating a plan for the manufacture of their items was challenging for some candidates, though most managed a fair attempt at this section.

**Section 3(b) and (c):** Evaluating their items was an area of weakness for many candidates. They struggled to give fully evaluative answers, and to link their evaluations to evidence generated through investigations and testing.

## Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates

### Component: Practical activity

**Section 1(b):** Candidates need to be encouraged to draw multiple conclusions from their investigations. These need to draw out the results and demonstrate how the information discovered will impact on the item to be made. The use of expressions such as 'therefore' or 'and so' may be useful triggers for candidates to develop their results into conclusive points of information.

**Section 1(c):** When presenting their solutions, candidates should be encouraged to use some sort of visual way of communicating the item that is to be made. This may be a detailed written description, but an annotated diagram is recommended. The diagram could be freehand, traced, or computer-generated. It is acceptable to use the diagrams on a pattern envelope, for example, as long as detailed annotation is then added.

The solution could include swatches of fabrics and samples of trimmings if the candidate wishes to do so. Candidates are also to be encouraged to link design features to their earlier research, for example that they are using a particular style of collar because it was the most popular in their questionnaire.

**Section 2(a):** Some candidates struggled to create a realistic plan. Some copied directly from pattern instructions. Candidates should be encouraged to account for pressing and finishing in their plans. To gain familiarity with the timing and sequencing of tasks, candidates could perhaps be encouraged to record time taken to complete steps during earlier projects in their course.

**Section 2(c):** Assessors need to make sure that they have fully read and fully understood the most up-to-date versions of marking documentation. In particular, the marking instructions for the construction techniques need to be carefully considered. Candidates need to be encouraged to choose the appropriate number of techniques, including the specified number from the high-tariff columns, otherwise there is a cap on the number of marks to be gained in this section.

Assessors also need to make sure that they are correctly identifying construction techniques, and applying appropriate marks according to the accuracy with which the candidate has carried them out. For example, a covered button with puckers in the fabric, or threads fraying out of the back, should not be given the full mark allocation for this process.

**Section 3(b) and (c):** When evaluating their items, candidates need to be encouraged to make use of, and refer to the evidence from their investigations and tests in order to support their evaluative comments.

Whilst it was pleasing to see that the conditions of assessment for coursework were adhered to in the majority of centres, there were a small number of examples where this may not have been the case. Following feedback from teachers, we have strengthened the conditions of assessment criteria for National 5 subjects and will do so for Higher and Advanced Higher. The criteria are published clearly on our website and in course materials and must be adhered to. SQA takes very seriously its obligation to ensure fairness and equity for all candidates in all qualifications through consistent application of assessment conditions and investigates all cases alerted to us where conditions may not have been met.

## Grade Boundary and Statistical information

### Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2016	571
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Number of resulted entries in 2017	549
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### Statistical information: Performance of candidates

#### Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	64.8%	64.8%	356	58
B	19.3%	84.2%	106	50
C	8.4%	92.5%	46	42
D	2.2%	94.7%	12	38
No award	5.3%	-	29	-

## General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and 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.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). 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 management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ 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, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this 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.
- ◆ 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.