



Course Report 2015

Subject	Fashion and Textile Technology
Level	Higher

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 examinations. 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 and marking instructions for the examination.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Component 1: Assignment

Stage 1: Design and Plan (Component 1: Section 1)

1 (a) Identifying key themes from the brief

The most popular briefs selected by the candidates were:

- ◆ Develop a fashion/textile item that a teenager could wear during the summer season
- ◆ Develop a decorative textile item influenced by the traditional culture of a country

The majority of candidates identified the key themes from their chosen brief; however some candidates did not clearly identify the key themes.

Some centres did not use the SQA approved briefs contained within the Assignment and Practical Activity Assessment Task, therefore candidates could not be awarded marks for 1 (a).

1 (b) (i-iii) Using appropriate research techniques from relevant sources to select and summarise main points of information

The research techniques were generally carried out to a good standard.

Investigations were well laid out in a clear and concise manner. Most investigations clearly identified sources used.

There were a number of centres that carried out high quality research, with excellent summaries, that allowed for effective progression to the next investigation. This research indicated that higher-order skills had been used effectively.

There were a number of centres that presented informative and valid investigations but did not summarise the findings of the investigation. This prevented candidates from obtaining marks within this element of the assessment.

1 (c) Justify an appropriate solution for a fashion/textile item based on the information generated from the research

This section of the assessment was carried out to a good standard. The majority of candidates produced an annotated drawing of their final fashion/textile item. The drawings were clearly labelled indicating the design features, fabric choice and construction techniques to be included/used on the fashion/textile item, derived from the research in 1 (b).

Some centres chose to list the design features, fabric characteristics and properties, construction techniques and specialist equipment, if any, to be used within the final item.

The majority of centres justified the choice of design features, fabric properties/ characteristics, construction techniques and specialist equipment and the justifications allowed for candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding gained during the course.

The justifications generally linked to the information gathered from the research in 1 (b).

Some candidates simply stated the points without justification, and therefore were not awarded marks. Centres should ensure that all points are clearly justified, using appropriate information generated from the research carried out.

1 (d) Prepare a plan for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

Plans were, generally, well presented in a clear and logical manner with timings being broken into realistic segments.

Some plans were too detailed and rewritten from the commercial pattern instructions. Candidates should write plans that are reflecting the pattern instructions in a more simplified format.

Almost all plans were written prior to the manufacturing of the item and were used by candidates to assist them throughout the construction process. Some plans had been written retrospectively which prevent candidates from obtaining some marks within this section.

1 (e) Prepare a requisition for required textiles, components, tools and equipment for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

Most candidates identified all the necessary textiles/components required to manufacture the final fashion/textile item.

Stage 3: Evaluation (Component 1: Section 2)

3 (a) (i-ii) Using an appropriate test, which relates specifically to the suitability of the textiles and/or components used, to provide relevant information about the item

This section was completed well, with most centres using appropriate tests to gain valid information for other elements in Stage 3.

The majority of tests identified the sources used and were laid out in a clear and concise structure.

The test feedback enabled candidates to identify relevant adaptations or amendments of the fashion/textile item.

3 (a) (iii) Identifying key information for use in evaluation

This section was generally carried out well. Key information obtained from the tests was identified clearly for use in section 3 (b).

3 (b) Evaluating the fashion/textile item, based on the results of testing

Evaluations were generally to a satisfactory standard. A number of centres presented clear evaluative statements which were generated using evidence gained in the tests 3 (a).

Some evaluations were written as statements and did not link to information obtained from the tests in 3 (a).

3 (c) Improving or adapting the product

This section was completed well with the majority of candidates identifying features within their fashion/textile item that could be improved or adapted. This was completed using information gathered from the tests 3 (a) or investigation 1 (b).

More emphasis needs to be placed upon the justification of the improvement or adaption, as this was an area that candidates did not focus on and therefore were not awarded marks.

Component 2: Practical Activity

Stage 2: Making the fashion/textile item (Component 2)

This section of the course assessment was carried out well and achieved high marks.

2 (a) Make and finish a complex fashion/textile item using at least eight appropriate textile construction techniques

Techniques selected were appropriate to the fashion/textile item being manufactured. The techniques allowed for the effective construction of the item with consideration of the fabric choices made by the candidate.

Techniques used in the construction of the fashion/textile items allowed for candidates to be awarded the maximum marks available.

Items manufactured generally used more advanced skills and were complex items. Some items were not complex enough for the Higher qualification.

2 (b) Complete the fashion/ textile item to an appropriate standard of quality and finish

The standard of the finished fashion/textile item was completed appropriately and generally was in line with national standards.

2 (c) Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in a record of work

This section was generally completed to a good standard. There was evidence that most candidates had effectively evaluated their plans of work throughout the manufacturing process.

More focus should be placed on this section of the Practical Activity as some candidates had minimal evaluations against their plans.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Component 1: Assignment

Stage 1: Design and plan (Component 1: Section 1)

1 (a) Identifying key themes from the brief

The majority of candidates successfully identified all the correct key themes.

Candidates effectively selected the correct key themes and either highlighted, underlined or pulled the themes from the brief. This allowed candidates to be awarded marks for this section.

Some candidates did not effectively highlight the key themes as they had split the full brief into sections rather than selecting key words/themes.

1 (b) (i–iii) Using appropriate research techniques from relevant sources to select and summarise main points of information

The majority of candidates completed their research, using a variety of techniques, to a good standard. Most of the research conducted was easy to interpret, concise and factual, and contained an appropriate source. The information in the investigations was generally to a very good standard.

Most of the investigations were progressive and allowed candidates to effectively gather information, enabling them to select an appropriate final solution. A number of candidates used the findings from one investigation to help identify what they need to investigate in their next investigation.

A number of candidates did not summarise their findings from investigations. The candidates used statements rather than show an understanding of how to progress these findings to assist them in selecting their final fashion/textile item.

A small number of candidates did not identify the specified expert for some investigations, namely questionnaires/interviews. Candidates should clearly state the relevant information of the experts used to ensure the investigation is valid.

1 (c) Justify an appropriate solution for a fashion/textile item based on the information generated from the research

Candidates, generally, performed well in this section of the Course assessment. There were a variety of approaches adopted by the candidates in the presentation of their final solution.

The majority of candidates chose an annotated drawing of their final fashion/textile item, clearly labelled with the design features and textiles and components to be incorporated. These features were clearly linked to the research carried out in 1 (b).

A smaller number of candidates included the construction techniques within their drawing.

A good proportion of candidates successfully justified the design features, construction techniques to be used, properties/characteristics of the textiles chosen and specialist equipment required for the construction of their final item with some simply stating the choices.

Most candidates that successfully justified their choices had written their justification separately to the drawing. This ensured that they had met the requirements of 1 (c).

1 (d) Prepare a plan for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

The majority of candidates created effective time plans which assisted them with the manufacturing of the fashion/textile item

Some plans were lacking in detail and others were difficult to interpret and not broken down into manageable tasks.

Dates and a broken down time allocation of tasks should be evident within candidates' plans.

1 (e) Prepare a requisition for required textiles, components, tools and equipment for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

Candidates included the majority of materials required for the construction of the fashion/textile item.

Generally, areas of information that candidates had omitted were: the dimensions of the textiles and zips, and the colours of components, eg zips/thread/embellishments.

Some candidates did not write their requisition in metric measurements. All materials used to manufacture the fashion/textile item should be written in metric measurements.

Stage 3: Evaluation (Component 1: Section 2)

3 (a) (i–iii) Using an appropriate test, which relates specifically to the suitability of the textiles and/or components used, to provide relevant information about the item

The majority of centres produced tests that enabled candidates to receive quality feedback on the finished fashion/textile item.

Candidates used suitable experts to gain information on the suitability of their textiles and components used to manufacture the fashion/textile item.

Most candidates clearly identified the experts used for testing. This is necessary to ensure the investigation is valid.

3 (b) Evaluating the fashion/textile item, based on the results of testing

Candidates generally evaluated their fashion/textile item to a good standard with reference to the information gathered in the tests 3 (a).

Most candidates effectively used the information to highlight areas that they could carry forward to 3 (c).

3 (c) Improving or adapting the product

Almost all candidates provided a point of improvement/adaption to their fashion/textile item. The points of change were relevant and linked to evidence obtained in the tests 3 (a) or the investigations 1 (b).

Some candidates did not justify the reason for the changes to the fashion/textile item.

Component 2: Practical Activity

2 (a) Make and finish a complex fashion/textile item using at least eight appropriate textile construction techniques

The majority of candidates demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of construction techniques by selecting appropriate techniques that would be suitable for the chosen textile of their fashion/textile item.

A good proportion of candidates manufactured items that demonstrated a higher level of skill and dexterity. The candidates produced good quality items that were fit for purpose.

Most items produced reflected complex skills and techniques. Some items were detailed rather than complex.

2 (b) Complete the fashion/textile item to an appropriate standard of quality and finish

The majority of items manufactured were completed to a good standard and allowed candidates to demonstrate their skills and workmanship.

Candidates should ensure that the item manufactured is finished correctly and to an appropriate standard for Higher, ie trimming threads, final press.

2 (c) Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in a record of work

Candidates completed this section of the Assignment to a good standard. Most candidates evaluated their plans appropriately and regularly.

Some candidates used evaluative comments less frequently or did not evaluate their plans.

More focus should be placed on this section of the Practical Activity as some candidates had minimal evaluations against their plans.

Section 3: Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Assignment

Stage 1: Design and plan (Component 1: Section 1)

1 (a) Identifying key themes from the brief

Most candidates identified the key themes from the given brief.

1 (b) (i–iii) Using appropriate research techniques from relevant sources to select and summarise main points of information

Most investigations were very well researched with a large quantity of useful information gathered. The research was generally well presented in a clear and concise manner.

Most candidates effectively identified appropriate sources/experts they had used to carry out the investigations.

Candidates who summarised their research and gathered at least four points of information were able to use it effectively to progress onto the next method of research. This allowed them to demonstrate higher-order skills by effectively selecting appropriate data that they could focus on for the next investigation, assisting them with their final fashion/textile item.

1 (c) Justify an appropriate solution for a fashion/textile item based on the information generated from the research

Most candidates presented a suitable solution derived from research.

The solutions were presented in a variety of formats, with annotated drawing being the most common. Many of these drawing were to a very high standard and clearly stated the design features which could easily be linked back to research gathered in 1 (b).

A number of candidates chose to use a separate table to document their justification of the design features, properties/characteristics of their chosen textile(s), construction techniques selected and any specialist equipment used. When candidates justified their choices in this format they were more likely to obtain a higher mark allocation for this section.

1 (d) Prepare a plan for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

Candidates generally produced plans which were logical and would allow for the fashion/textile item to be constructed effectively.

1 (e) Prepare a requisition for required textiles, components, tools and equipment for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

The majority of candidates included almost all of the necessary materials required to construct the item.

Stage 3: Evaluation (Component 1: Section 2)

3 (a) (i–iii) Using an appropriate test, which relates specifically to the suitability of the textiles and/or components used, to provide relevant information about the item.

Candidates selected appropriate experts for the specified test relating to the suitability of the textile and components used to manufacture the fashion/textile item.

The majority of the candidates included the expert's details, ie name, profession and location. This is required to ensure the test is valid and factual. If a test was conducted using the internet or literary research the candidates referenced all website/books used.

The majority of tests provided quality feedback to allow the candidates to select points which could be used in the evaluation and adaption of their item, 3 (b) and (c).

Most candidates used questionnaires or sensory tests with a supplementary interview to gain information from their target group. Most candidates asked questions regarding changes that could be made which assisted them with 3 (c).

3 (b) Evaluating the fashion/textile item, based on the results of testing

A good proportion of candidates successfully evaluate their fashion/textile item.

The evaluations should contain the candidate's opinion, a fact about the opinion linked to evidence from the tests in 3 (a), and a consequence of the point discussed. When this format was adopted by the candidate, the evaluation was full and ensured that they could be awarded a higher proportion of marks in this section.

3 (c) Improving or adapting the product

Candidates successfully linked their amendments or adaptations of their item to evidence gathered in either the investigations 1 (b) or the test 3 (a).

A good proportion of candidates justified their choices, again linking their opinion to evidence in 1 (b) or 3 (a).

Component 2: Practical Activity

2 (a) Make and finish a complex fashion/textile item using at least eight appropriate textile construction techniques

There was an excellent variety of fashion/textile items produced by candidates. The candidates' items were generally manufactured to a very good quality finish, and candidates effectively demonstrated their skills that they had developed during the course.

Generally candidates who had progressed from the National 5 Fashion and Textile Technology Course produced items that exhibited more complex skills, and their workmanship was of a very good standard.

2 (b) Complete the fashion/ textile item to an appropriate standard of quality and finish

The standard of the finished fashion/textile item was completed appropriately and generally was in line with national standards.

2 (c) Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in a record of work

This section was generally completed to a good standard.

Section 4: Areas in which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Assignment

Stage 1: Design and plan (Component 1: Section 1)

1 (a) Identifying key themes from the brief

Some candidates did not clearly select the key themes. The full brief was split, and therefore did not indicate that the candidate had shown an understanding of the requirements of 1 (a).

Key themes of the brief should be highlighted, underlined or lifted and written into a separate box, for example, 'teenager' and 'summer season'.

1 (b) (i–iii) Using appropriate research techniques from relevant sources to select and summarise main points of information

A number of candidates completed their research to a very high standard, containing a large volume of factual and helpful information, which would assist them with their selection of the final fashion/textile item. In a number of cases candidates did not obtain marks for the investigations carried out as they did not successfully summarise points of information from the research gathered — they simply repeated evidence from the investigation and did not show a progressive approach to their conclusions. It is necessary for candidates to pull information from the investigation, and conclude in the summary as to how it will assist them in moving forward.

Some candidates did not summarise any of their investigation therefore they did not meet the requirements of 1 (b).

When candidates use a mood board as a research technique it is necessary for them to indicate the sources of information and include points of summary. A number of candidates included mood boards without appropriate supplementary information, therefore did not meet the assessment standards for 1 (b).

1 (c) Justify an appropriate solution for a fashion/textile item based on the information generated from the research

Some candidates did not meet the Assessment Standards for this section as they did not justify their design features, properties/characteristics of the chosen textile(s), construction techniques selected to manufacture the item, and any specialist equipment selected.

Some candidates presented an appropriate solution but simply stated the choices rather than justify them.

1 (d) Prepare a plan for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

Some candidates wrote their plans retrospectively. Some candidates' plans were lacking in detail and others were difficult to interpret and not broken down into manageable tasks.

Dates and a broken down time allocation of tasks should be used within candidates' plans.

Rewritten plans copied from the commercial pattern instructions should be adapted and written in the candidate's words.

1 (e) Prepare a requisition for required textiles, components, tools and equipment for the manufacture of the fashion/textile item

Metric measurements should be used when requisitioning all textiles and components.

Stage 3: Evaluation (Component 1: Section 2)

3 (a) (i–iii) Using an appropriate test, which relates specifically to the suitability of the textiles and/or components used, to provide relevant information about the item

Candidates should ensure that they identify all sources of evidence and experts when using them within the tests. All experts should be identified and simply referring to them as a 'textile expert' does not validate the investigation.

3 (b) Evaluating the fashion/textile item, based on the results of testing

This was completed to a good standard.

3 (c) Improving or adapting the product

Some candidates did not justify their amendments or adaptations that they had highlighted. The point was simply stated.

Candidates at times did not refer to evidence gathered in the investigations 1 (b) or the tests 3 (a), to select appropriate amendments or adaptations. The points stated were not from evidence rather the candidates' opinion.

Component 2: Practical Activity

2 (a) Make and finish a complex fashion/textile item using at least eight appropriate textile construction techniques

Some candidates found the manufacturing of a complex fashion/textile item challenging. Most of these candidates' items did not demonstrate enough techniques from the mid to upper columns in the Higher Construction Techniques Marking Instructions.

The items produced were detailed but lacked complex skills to ensure they were suitable for the Higher Fashion and Textile Technology course.

Centres should ensure that the fashion/textile item that the candidates select to manufacture has the appropriate level of challenge and complexity required for the Higher qualification.

2 (b) Complete the fashion/ textile item to an appropriate standard of quality and finish

Some candidates did not finish the item to the correct standard. These candidates did not trim or press the fashion/textile item effectively, so the item was not aesthetically pleasing. Other candidates found some techniques to be too challenging, for example, zips, waistbands and collars, which affected the overall finish and appearance. Some of these items were not fit for their intended purpose due to the standard of finish.

2 (c) Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in a record of work

Some candidates did not correctly evaluate the plan of work. Most of these evaluations were statements.

The responses demonstrated good referencing to facts but did not indicate the candidates' opinion or a consequence.

Section 5: Advice to centres for preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Assignment

Stage 1: Design and plan

1 (a) Key themes

Centres **must use** the SQA brief contained in the Assignment and Practical Activity Assessment Task.

1 (b) Investigations

All candidates should clearly state the identified expert in all investigations. For example, if a candidate is interviewing a fabric shop manager, they should state the interviewee's name, job title and place of work (eg A Young, Fabric Shop Manager, Mandors Glasgow).

All investigations should have at least four points of summary/conclusion that are progressive. Candidates should not repeat information from the investigation; they should indicate how the point highlighted will assist them with their selection of the final fashion/textile item.

Candidates should be encouraged to choose their own methods of research and sources, which will allow them to select and produce a personalised solution. Candidates should not have a preconceived idea of the item they will manufacture prior to any research. All research should make a contribution to a final decision/solution.

1 (c) Present a solution

Candidates should ensure that they link the design features and properties/characteristics of their chosen textile to evidence gathered in the investigations 1 (b).

Candidates should ensure that they clearly justify the reasons for the design features on their fashion and textile item, properties/characteristics of the textile chosen, and the construction and specialist techniques selected.

Specialist equipment can be overlockers, embroidery machines, zip feet etc.

1 (d) Plans

Plans should not be written retrospectively. They should be broken into realistic time blocks for tasks, rather than 50/55 min periods.

1 (e) Requisition

Candidates should state all textiles and components in metric measurements.

Stage 3: Evaluation

3 (a–c) Tests/evaluations/adaptions

Evaluations should be completed using a fact, opinion, consequence format to ensure that candidates successfully fulfil the requirements of 3 (b).

Candidates should justify all amendments/adaptions that they highlight. These points should reflect evidence gathered in either the investigations 1 (b) or the tests 2 (a).

Good practice

Some centres created a pro forma for their candidates. When this was used, candidates generally met the Assessment Standard for the coursework assessment.

Centres should ensure that candidates are producing different fashion/textile items. Some candidates in centres had all chosen to make the same fashion item, with the only difference being the choice of textile/colour. Centres should be ensuring that there is a good level of personalisation and choice for the candidates when they are completing their coursework assessment and Practical Activity.

It would be useful for centres to number the pages of coursework activity.

The majority of centres had good quality assurance procedures in place for both internal and external verification.

The majority of centres used photographic/video evidence to good effect.

Ensure there is photographic evidence of resources and components prior to construction of the final solution.

Component 2: Practical Activity

Stage 2 (a-c) Making the fashion/textile item

Centres must ensure that candidates are manufacturing an item which is complex, as stated in the Higher coursework Assignment. The item to be manufactured by the candidate should demonstrate more complex skills, reflecting more detailed techniques and a higher quality finish to ensure it justifies the merit of a Higher qualification.

Centre marking of Section 2 were generally in line with SQA guidelines.

In 2 (a) and (b), candidates are being appropriately awarded marks for the construction techniques selected and the quality of the finished item. Some of the fashion/textile items selected by the candidates were at times not complex and challenging enough for the Higher course. Centres should ensure that the fashion/textile item selected for manufacture has the appropriate level of complexity required, and demonstrates a higher range of skills and techniques. Centres should refer to the Higher Construction Techniques Marking Instructions for guidance.

The majority of centres are correctly awarding marks in 2 (c) for the evaluation against the plan.

Good practice

The majority of candidates were presented at the correct levels.

Centres had made good judgements on the Practical Course Assessment and consistently applied the correct standards to ensure candidates were fairly marked.

The majority of centres used the Higher Assignment and Practical Activity assessments records effectively, for the recording of marks and candidates performance, for each section of the Practical Activity.

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2014	0
Number of resulted entries in 2015	213

Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark - 100				
A	48.4%	48.4%	103	78
B	25.4%	73.7%	54	67
C	19.7%	93.4%	42	57
D	3.8%	97.2%	8	52
No award	2.8%	-	6	0

Overall the course assessment proved to be easier than intended. While the assessment was valid and set at the appropriate level of demand, there was a new type of assessment approach used that centres and candidates were not familiar with. The grade boundaries were increased from the intended by 8 for Grade A and 7 for Grade C to reflect this.

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.