



Course Report 2018

Subject	Fashion and Textile Technology
Level	National 5

This report provides information on the performance of candidates. 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

Summary of the course assessment

The National 5 course has changed significantly this year, with the external marking of sections 1 and 3 of the practical activity and the introduction of the question paper. The external marking of the practical activity has resulted in a reduction in the marks for this section. Marks for section 2 practical activity (making the item) remain high, although they are now weighted from 50 marks to 35 marks to reflect the removal of unit assessment.

The question paper performed in line with expectations and was found to be challenging by some candidates. Feedback from the marking team suggests that it was fair in terms of course coverage and overall level of demand.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: question paper

Question 1(a) Most candidates could name a synthetic fibre, although some named natural fibres. Most candidates could give reasons for suitability, although not all linked this to the hooded top.

Question 1(c) Most candidates could give advantages and disadvantages to online shopping.

Question 2(a) Many candidates could give at least one reason for the fabric quantity chart and back view.

Question 2(b) Many candidates could give two ways of transferring darts.

Question 3(a) Many candidates could give style features, but often failed to explain them. The embellishment was answered well, with many candidates being able to access both marks.

Components 2 and 3: assignment and practical activity

Section 1 — assignment

Section 1(a) Most candidate identified two themes correctly.

Section 1(b) Most candidates carried out investigations correctly.

Section 1(c) Presentation of the solution, when present, was completed well.

Section 1(d) There was less evidence of retrospective time plans this year than in previous years.

Section 1(e) Requisitions were done well by most candidates.

Section 2 — practical activity (making the item)

Many candidates focused on the creation of their textile item as the most important part of the activity, as it tends to be the most time consuming. A good range of items was 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, despite the difficulties of working with the brocade fabric many candidates chose for the oriental brief.

Section 3 — assignment

Section 3(a) Many candidates completed the testing well, giving clear and concise results, which were well set out.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: question paper

It was clear that many candidates had been taught the subject knowledge, but many found it difficult to answer the question paper using the command words describe, explain and evaluate, which resulted in them not being able to access marks.

Question 1(b) Most candidates found the evaluation difficult, providing statements which did not evaluate, or were general comments on a knitted fabric and not related to the hooded top for a sporting event.

Question 1(c) Most candidates could give advantages and disadvantages to online shopping, however many gave statements and failed to describe an advantage/disadvantage. It is a statement to say 'you can shop in the comfort of your own home'. To describe, the candidate needs to give a reason why this is useful, ie you don't need to pay for parking or won't get wet if it's raining.

Question 2(a) Most candidates could give one reason for the fabric quantity chart and back view, many found the second reason difficult and either repeated themselves or left it blank. Some candidates were clearly confused as to what the back view was, referring to the whole of the back of the pattern envelope instead.

Question 2(b) Most candidates could name two methods of transferring pattern marking. Some failed to use correct terminology, or tried to describe the processes rather than naming them.

Question 2(c) Many candidates found evaluation difficult and provided statements instead. These often didn't refer to the child's summer party dress, for example they were general comments about any dress, and/or not referring to properties of 100% cotton.

Question 3(a) Some candidates did not read and make use of the scenario provided, meaning their answers were too vague, and did not describe or explain

features relevant to a celebrity playsuit. Some candidates mixed up style with construction techniques or properties of fabric.

Question 3(b) Candidates who did not perform well in this question often did not relate answers back to the celebrity range being supplied by the retailer, instead answering in general terms about factors which would apply to any range. Alternatively, they provided statements rather than explaining in sufficient detail.

Component 2: assignment and practical activity

Section 1 — assignment

Section 1(c) Presenting and justifying solution, based on information gathered from investigations

Most candidates provided a solution page, where candidates either drew or described their item, however not all candidates did this which put them at a significant disadvantage during the justification stage, as markers can use the solution page to help with understanding the justification.

Justification — many candidates do not use the information gathered from the investigations for their features, instead using personal preference. This means they cannot access marks in this section.

Section 1(d) Time plan

Candidates who found this challenging, often did not provide dates or times, or used whole lessons, which does not provide enough detail as to time allocation given to various tasks. Candidates who copied the pattern instructions, without putting it into their own words did not demonstrate an understanding of the tasks completed, and therefore were not awarded marks.

Section 2 — practical activity (making the item)

The Chinese brocade fabric used by many candidates who selected the oriental brief was difficult to work with and provided many challenges for candidates. Most candidates provided eight construction techniques, with two high tariff techniques, but not all did and this limited their mark allocation.

Section 3 — assignment

Evaluation

Section 3(a) Most candidate did the testing and provided clear concise results. However, the four marks allocated were for providing points of information which could then be used to evaluate the item, which many candidates failed to do, and this limited the marks they could achieve.

Section 3(b) Many candidates failed to evaluate by only writing statements, which often were based on opinion rather than information from testing.

Section 3(c) Many candidates failed to evaluate but made statements with no evidence to support this, eg 'It took me much longer to put my zip in, this was easier than I thought'.

Section 3: advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: question paper

Candidates should be given more experience of answering exam-style questions, specifically the evaluation, describe and explain type questions, which caused many candidates confusion. Candidates should be encouraged to read and use the scenario information, given at the beginning of a question, which gives them the context within which to answer.

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

Component 2: assignment and practical activity

Section 1 — assignment

Section 1(c) Presenting and justifying solution, based on information gathered from investigations

Candidates should be encouraged to put as much detail as possible in the solution page, including samples of fabrics used, sizings and details of components used if possible.

Numbering the features will help candidates to ensure they include a minimum of seven and providing links from investigations onto the solution page will help candidates to access all marks available, for example 'zip: I have used a zip as this was the most popular fastening in investigation 2'. Some candidates created a table with feature and explanation as headings, and these were successful to ensure candidates had included sufficient features and explanations.

Candidates should be encouraged to include investigations which involve finding out about properties and characteristics of fabrics. They should also investigate construction techniques which would provide information for justification, eg if a candidate asks in a questionnaire 'should the item be machine washable?', and 15/20 people say yes, that can be used to justify the use of a machine washable fabric. If they ask, 'should my item have a zipped pocket?', and 12 people say yes, that can be used to justify both the zip and pocket.

Section 1(d) Time plan

Candidates should be encouraged to write the time plan, rather than copying from the pattern instructions, thinking about the steps they are going to complete, and how long these will take, using 10-15 minute time sections. To gain familiarity with the timing and sequencing of tasks, candidates could be encouraged to record time taken to complete steps during earlier projects in their course.

Section 2 — practical activity (making the item)

This is the section candidates seem to prefer and spend most time on, but candidates should be encouraged to 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 3(b) and 3(c). These should not use averages but refer to actual results.

Section 3(b) When evaluating their items, candidates need to 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 need to 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 2017	549
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Number of resulted entries in 2018	444
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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	13.1%	13.1%	58	70
B	21.6%	34.7%	96	60
C	29.5%	64.2%	131	50
D	20.9%	85.1%	93	40
No award	14.9%	-	66	-

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 which 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.

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 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.

Grade boundaries from exam 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 exams set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the corresponding practice exam paper.