



Course Report 2016

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 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 1: Assignment

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

1 (a) Identifying key themes from the brief

The most popular brief selected by the candidates was: Develop a fashion/textile item suitable for a teenager attending a music festival.

The majority of candidates clearly identified the key themes from their chosen brief, and a large number either used mind maps or provided written explanation to provide further clarification. However, some candidates did not clearly identify the key themes.

Some centres did not use the SQA-approved briefs given in the Assignment and Practical Activity Assessment Task.

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

The vast majority of research techniques were carried out to a good standard.

Most investigations were well laid out in a clear and concise manner.

Some investigations were extensive and on occasion a large amount of content was lifted from the source (internet). Candidates should be altering large volumes of data into their own words. On occasion the content of the investigation was not linked to the aim.

Most investigations clearly identified sources used, however on occasion some candidates omitted the name, position and/or company of the expert who was used for the research.

Many candidates were using the teacher as the only expert for the investigations.

Some candidates are not displaying all results for the investigations.

Many candidates are only asking three/four questions in an interview. The interview should contain at least five questions to ensure it provides the candidate with sufficient data.

Literary/internet search requires three different sources for a valid investigation.

A number of centres carried out high quality research, with excellent summaries, that allowed for effective progression to the next investigation.

A number of centres presented informative and valid investigations, but did not summarise the findings of the investigation. This prevented candidates from obtaining marks for this element of the assignment.

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 generally 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, all derived from the research in 1 (b).

Some candidates attached the picture from the commercial pattern of their solution. This was accepted, but candidates should ensure that they clearly describe and justify the features, properties/characteristics of the textile and construction techniques of the solution.

A small number of candidates did not attach an illustration of their solution as specified in the coursework assignment task booklet.

Some centres chose to list the design features, fabric characteristics and properties, construction techniques and specialist equipment, if any, to be used for the final item. This format tended to benefit the candidates in ensuring they were clearly stating and justifying all the information required.

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

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

A number of candidates did not use information that was derived from their investigations when justifying their solution.

Some candidates simply stated the points without justification, 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.

Timings should be in 10–15 minute blocks rather than 50–55 minute blocks/lessons.

Most candidates included pressing/finishing throughout the process.

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 for this section.

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

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

The majority of candidates included the measurements of textiles/components used for the solutions in metric measurements.

Stage 3: Evaluation (Component 1: Section 2)

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

Section (i–ii) was completed well with most candidates using appropriate tests to gain valid information, allowing them to progress effectively throughout stage 3.

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

Some candidates are stating the source as a textile expert but not including their name/occupation/workplace.

Most candidates carried out a test to gain data on the suitability of their textile/components used to manufacture their solution.

The majority of candidates used sensory tests and interviews in section (i–ii). Most candidates gained information that allowed them 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 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 to a good standard, with the majority of candidates identifying features of their fashion/textile item that could be improved or adapted. The majority of response demonstrated clear links to data obtained from either the tests 3 (a) or investigations 1 (b).

More emphasis needs to be placed on 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

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

The majority of candidates manufactured their solution using appropriate construction techniques, as specified in the construction techniques marking tariff grid, for Higher level.

This majority of candidates carried out this section of the course assessment to a good standard and achieved high marks.

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.

Some centres demonstrated an excellent standard of manufactured items. These items included a high standard of workmanship and complex skills were carried out.

Some solutions manufactured were not complex enough for Higher level and did not have an accurate level of construction techniques within the item.

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

Most centres used the updated Higher level Construction Techniques Marking Instructions correctly.

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. Some candidates evaluated each process.

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

The Internally Assessed Course Assessments at Higher 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 for simply having attempted construction techniques regardless of how well they were completed. This more realistic range of marks meant a slight adjustment at

the grade boundary meeting, bringing the grade boundaries down from the level at which they had been set last year.

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 in a review of the wording of the marking instructions and also through Understanding Standards events and materials.

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

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

The majority of candidates successfully identified all 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.

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, with a large volume of factual and helpful information, which would assist them with their selection of the final fashion/textile item.

Most of the research conducted was easy to interpret, concise, progressive, and factual, and contained an appropriate source.

A number of candidates used the findings from one investigation to help identify what they need to investigate in their next investigation.

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. A variety of approaches were adopted by the candidates in the presentation of their final solution.

The majority of candidates used their illustration of the solution to clearly label the design features, textiles and components, and construction techniques to be used. These features were **clearly linked** and **derived** from the research carried out in 1 (b).

A good proportion of candidates successfully justified the design features, construction techniques, properties/characteristics of the textiles chosen and any specialist equipment

that they required for the construction of their final item, which was linked to data derived from the investigations.

Most candidates that successfully justified their choices had written their justification separately to the drawing, using a table or separate page. This ensured that they met the assessment standards for 1c.

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. Most candidates allocated 10–15 minute blocks to a task(s).

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.

Stage 3: Evaluation (Component 1: Section 2)

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

The majority of candidates produced tests that enabled them to gain 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 identify 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).

Component 2: Practical Activity

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

The variety of items produced, by a number of candidates, was outstanding and demonstrated their technical ability and skills.

A good range of solutions were manufactured by the candidates, with a good level of complex techniques being incorporated into the fashion/textile item. The candidates' items were generally manufactured to a 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 demonstrated more complex skills, and their workmanship was of a very good standard.

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.

In 2 (b) candidates generally performed well in making regular comments against their original plan.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Assignment

1 (a) Identifying key themes from the brief

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

Some 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.

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. The candidates simply repeated evidence within 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.

To ensure candidates can gain marks in section 1 (c), it would be beneficial for candidates to investigate properties and characteristics of fabric(s) and construction techniques that they may consider for their solution. A number of candidates are not considering this when completing 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

Candidates presented their solution in varying formats. Some candidates are not presenting their solution with the required level of detail necessary for this section.

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

A large number of pupils justified their solution, but many of the points that linked to the properties/characteristics and construction techniques were not derived from evidence gained from the investigations.

1 (d) Prepare a plan for the manufacture 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 breakdown of time allocation of tasks should be evident within candidates' plans.

Some candidates were rewriting the commercial patterns instructions, which are very detailed. A more simplified version, written in the candidate's words, should be used.

1 (e) Prepare a requisition for required textiles, components, tools and equipment for the manufacture 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 textiles used to manufacture the fashion/textile item should be written in metric measurements.

Stage 3: Evaluation (Component 1: Section 2)

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

Some candidates did not correctly identify the expert by stating their name/occupation/workplace. This is required to ensure the test is valid.

Candidates were using only 3–4 questions for an interview and did not always present the results of their tests.

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 but were rather the candidate's 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 5–6 mark columns in the Higher Construction Techniques Marking Instructions.

The items produced were detailed but lacked complex skills to ensure it was suitable for the Higher level.

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

Not all candidates completed textile items that employed eight or more construction techniques. Not all candidates employed the required number of high-tariff techniques. Some techniques were incorrectly identified, thus impacting on the marks allocated.

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, meaning 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.

Some candidates used unstable textiles which they found challenging to work with. This had an impact on the finished quality and appearance of the item manufactured. Candidates should consider the chosen textiles characteristics and their own capabilities/skills to ensure that the item manufactured is completed to an appropriate quality.

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

Evaluating their plan was an area of weakness for many candidates. Most candidates had made regular comments on their plans, but few of these were fully evaluative in nature.

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

Section 3: Advice for the preparation of future candidates

Component 1: Assignment

The following information will provide centres with guidance on preparing candidates with the completion of the Assignment and Practical Activity Assessment Task.

Stage 1: Design and plan

1 (a) Key themes

Centres must use the SQA briefs, which are published annually. These can be accessed from SQA secure site.

Candidates should ensure that they clearly highlight the chosen themes of the brief. This can be achieved by underlining or alternatively candidates have also created mind maps of the selected themes or identified and explained each of the themes.

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. (A Young, Fabric Shop Manager, Mandors, Glasgow).

A large number of candidates are referring to the source as a 'textile expert', which does not provide sufficient information.

All investigations should have at least four points of summary/conclusion that show progression. Candidates should not repeat information within 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 selected the solution they will manufacture prior to any research. All research should be progressive and lead to the final solution.

A large proportion of candidates are using mood boards as part of their investigations. It is essential that all sources (eg magazines/websites/journals) are stated to ensure the investigation is valid. In addition, a number of candidates, when using a mood board, do not summarise their findings, so they are not meeting the assessment standards for 1 (b).

To ensure candidates are meeting the standards in 1 (c), it would of benefit if one investigation is linked to the property and/or characteristics of textiles/ components/construction techniques. This will assist the candidates in 1 (c) when they justify their chosen textiles properties/characteristics and construction techniques that they will use to manufacture their chosen item.

All results from investigations should be clearly laid out. Some candidates are not including the responses from interviews/questionnaire/sensory tests/internet/literary searches. The candidates are writing a summary of the findings which is in their own words. This does not accurately present the findings gained from the investigations. The candidate has the opportunity to summarise their findings at the end of each investigation.

Recommendations for investigations:

- ◆ Interview: minimum five questions, clearly state source/expert
- ◆ Questionnaire: 20 respondents, clearly state target group
- ◆ Internet research: minimum three different sources, clearly stated each with URL

1 (c) Present a solution

Candidates should ensure that they link design features, properties/characteristics of their chosen textile and construction techniques from evidence derived from 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, tailor's dummy, etc.

1 (d) Plans

Plans should not be written retrospectively. They should be broken into realistic time blocks for tasks, eg 10–15 minutes, rather than 50–55 minute periods.

1 (e) Requisition

Candidates should state all textiles and components in metric measurements.

All dimensions of textiles used should be included.

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 assessment standards 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 were generally more successful in meeting the assessment standard for the coursework assessment.

Centres should ensure that candidates are producing different fashion/textile items. A number of centres had candidates all manufacturing the same solution. Centres should ensure that there is personalisation and choice available to all candidates when they are completing their coursework assessment and practical activity. The investigations should guide the candidate in creating an individual and personalised item. The item should reflect the key points summarised in each investigation.

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

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 that is complex, as specified in the Higher level coursework assignment. The item should demonstrate complex skills, reflecting more detailed construction techniques and a higher quality finish to ensure it justifies the merit of a Higher qualification.

Centres' marking of Section 2 was generally in line with SQA guidelines.

Centres should ensure that they are referring to the Higher level construction techniques marking tariff grid and the associated guidelines for the manufacturing of the candidate's fashion/textile item.

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 level 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.

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

Section 2a: 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 b: When evaluating their plans, candidates need to be encouraged to make evaluative comments rather than simple observations.

Good practice

The majority of candidates were presented at the correct level.

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 level assignment and practical activity assessments records effectively, for the recording of marks and candidates' performance, for each section of the practical activity.

Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2015	213
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Number of resulted entries in 2016	305
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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	33.4%	33.4%	102	77
B	35.4%	68.9%	108	66
C	19.7%	88.5%	60	56
D	4.6%	93.1%	14	51
No award	6.9%	-	21	0

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.