

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/01
Fibres, Fabrics and Design

Key messages

Candidates should include detailed, relevant and specific examples in **discussion** questions.

Candidates knowledge of fibres was more general. At this level candidates should be able to discuss specific points about a natural, regenerated or synthetic fibre and consider how the construction would affect the fabric properties.

There was some confusion between warp and weft knitting.

Candidates need to make sure that they read the questions carefully and answer accordingly. For example, if they are asked to evaluate methods of manufacturing, simply writing about the different methods is not sufficient to gain marks in the higher band.

General comments

Responses generally covered the range of questions on the paper with few areas where a minority of candidates were unable to respond.

It is important that handwriting is neat and legible.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This question was well answered overall, with the majority of candidates able to describe the process and many knowing enough to be able to achieve full marks.
- (b) Candidates were more familiar with cotton fibres than viscose fibres. Many understood that cotton fibres have a 'bean shaped' cross section and flat, twisted ribbon and were able to draw a diagram. Candidates needed to be able to describe the results for viscose fibres to the same standard.
- (c) Candidates answered this question fairly well but there was some confusion over viscose melting like a synthetic fibre.
- (d) Candidates were able to include more obvious points such as comfort, absorbency, strength, etc. in their answers. It was clear that candidates knew the advantages of cotton fibres well but were not so familiar with viscose, so it was hard for them to achieve marks in the top band. Some candidates needed to go beyond talking more generally about both fibres.

Question 2

- (a) (i) **Twill weave** – This question was answered well. Many candidates understood warp and weft threads and could draw a correct diagram.
- (ii) **Sateen weave** – This question was answered quite well. Many candidates knew that a sateen weave had a sheen and floats of threads. Diagrams needed to be clearer.
- (iii) **Weft knitting** – Many candidates answered this question fairly well with correct diagrams and information about the construction of weft knitting.
- (iv) **Warp knitting** – Less successful candidates needed to be able to use an accurate diagram and explain how warp knitting is constructed.
- (b) Candidates included general points about the difference between natural and synthetic fabrics but found it more difficult to be specific about polyester twill and silk weft knit.. Candidates needed to link the fibre to the method of construction to enable them to gain marks in the top band..

Question 3

- (a) The majority of candidates misunderstood this question and overall marks were low. Candidates needed to discuss the shape of the line such as 'A line' or seam lines rather than talking about line related to 'pattern'. Some candidates also needed to be able to explain how surface pattern contributes to good design of textile products.
- (b) (i) This question was answered really well with candidates producing some beautiful designs which included line and surface pattern, as well as many other features. They were often coloured in and labelled neatly with many candidates achieving full marks.
- (ii) Candidates needed to read this question more carefully. Reasons why a design would be successful in contemporary fashion include following fashion trends and references to what celebrities are currently wearing.
- (c) Many candidates were able to show their understanding of different manufacturing methods. The question was about evaluating the different manufacturing methods and so candidates needed to discuss the methods suitable for their chosen design. This question was very often answered as an explanation about one-off, batch and mass production with no overall evaluation of which methods they would choose.

Question 4

- (a) (i) Many candidates were able to describe fashion fads and give an example.
(ii) Many candidates were able to describe fashion revivals and give an example.
- (b) More successful candidates showed very good knowledge of seams and edge finishes. Less successful candidates needed to accurately interpret the question.
- (c) Candidates needed to compare the advantages and disadvantages of different types of retail outlets such as designer shops, internet shopping, high street, department stores, etc. rather than three different retail outlets. Candidates knowledge of internet shopping was generally good.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/02
Practical Test

Key messages

- Centres provided candidates with challenging garments to make.
- Candidates chose a variety of printed cotton fabrics some too heavy and more suitable in weight and handle for making soft furnishings. There was a good selection of plain, linen and viscose fabrics.
- A variety of garments were made:
 - Sleeveless tops with a yoke and back pleat.
 - Top with princess seams and a capped sleeve.
 - Skirts with pleats, side seam pockets and a waistband.
 - Straight skirts with a ruffle, one hip pocket and a waistband.

General comments

Centres need to submit a list/register of candidates entered for the practical examination.

The examination needs to be set by the centre. The centre may forward a proposal to Cambridge to approve before the examination date.

Unused fabric should **not** be sent with the candidates' garments.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Task Analysis and Planning

- (a) Candidates showed good understanding of the tasks set by their centre.
- (b) Candidates fully stated the fabrics, accessories and equipment needed to make their choice of garment.
- (c) Candidates need to state reasons to justify the choices made in fabric selection, including reference to the occasion when it will be worn. Reference should be made to the fabric's properties e.g. fibre, durability, comfort and care.

Question 2

Preparation

- (a) Paper patterns used by each candidate should be submitted with the garment and drafted pattern pieces need to be labelled.

Candidates making a straight skirt with a ruffle, drafted hip seam pockets in various sizes. Waistbands should have been cut as one piece and with a fold. Most had a seam line at the top of the waistband and the left-hand side panel was cut successfully. Many candidates did not make a side panel for the skirt and there were skirts with right hand side panels.

Candidates making a sleeveless top with a yoke and inverted pleat produced very good card patterns.

- (c) Drawn diagrams of cutting layouts showed good understanding of fabric usage and cutting on the straight-of-grain and the fold of the fabric. Candidates who drafted their own paper patterns showed a high standard of work.
- (d) The marks awarded by centres for the Testing (fit) of the garment were carried forward.

Question 3

Implementation

Organisation and Time Management

- (a) Centres provided comments and marks for the testing and fit of the garments, these were carried forward.

Tasks

- (b) The tasks set varied and the following garments were made:

Sleeveless tops with yoke and opening and back inverted pleat.

Top with princess seams and cap sleeve.

Top with flared sleeves and a long skirt.

Pleated skirts with side zip and one side seam pocket.

Straight skirts with a waistband, ruffle and side seam pocket.

(i) **Disposal of fullness, darts, pleats and Ruffles**

Sleeveless tops/ bust darts and back skirt waist darts were made well, pressed and secured.

Centre Back bodice pleats needed to meet at the yoke seam line and were pressed poorly.

Knife pleats set into skirts were well set but the pleat widths varied.

Ruffles were made either 6 cm wide for each side, or 6 cm across the total width.

The majority were gathered with an even distribution of fullness. Some were folded and pleated.

(ii) **Seams and finishes**

Princess seams in a semi fitted top were successfully stitched.

Seam allowances in sleeveless tops were often too wide.

Overlocked seam allowances were neatenened successfully.

Where cut fabric pieces were overlocked before machining the garment sections together, it produced uneven edges at the ends of the darts.

Where a zigzag stitch was used for finishing the seam allowances, the stitching was too far away from the raw edges of the same allowance leaving the edges to fray.

Ruffles placed on a skirt seam varied in the way they were attached.

Seam allowances on both the ruffle and skirt seams produced a bulky finish.

The most successful results had the skirt panel seam allowances neatenened and pressed open.

The ruffle was then gathered through the centre and stitched through the panel seam line.

(iii) **Pockets**

Skirt pockets set into a side seam were generally well made.

Pockets cut with a horizontal top edge should have been set into the waistline seam.

(iv) **Yokes**

A good standard was achieved. Yoke seams were at their best when made with a lightweight cotton and when the yoke seam allowances were neatened and pressed together towards the neckline.

(v) **Openings and Fastenings**

Bias binding strips were successfully attached to sleeveless tops finishing the armholes and neckline.

The weak point was the overlap at the ends where the fabric has to be folded.

Bias strips cut to narrow were less successful as they did not cover the raw edges and allow for a hem on the binding.

Centre Back top openings were made well with facings and snap fasteners.

Invisible zippers set into straight and pleated skirts and a semi fitted top were successfully inserted.

(vi) **Waistbands**

Waistbands on pleated skirts varied in finished width and were made too long leaving a large overlap at the two ends.

Waistbands on straight skirts were often left incomplete. Many were cut in two sections and stitched at the top edge. Iron-on interfacing was applied well. The overlap at the opening was poorly made.

(vii) **Sleeves**

One cap sleeve was successfully made and inserted into a fitted top.

(viii) **Hems**

Hems need to be stitched after the seams are sewn to form a continuous finished edge.

Hems in sleeveless tops with an inverted pleat were too wide for the design. There was excess fullness.

A straight stitch was used but set too far away from the neatened edge.

A narrow machined hem would have been more suitable.

Many skirts with ruffles had the hem and slit unfinished.

Question 4

Evaluation

(a) **Conclusion**

Some candidates needed to produce a summary of their experience during the examination.

(b) **Findings**

Most candidates discussed the achievements and difficulties that they experienced and made reference to sharing equipment and organising their time.

Many candidates had realised where they had made mistakes and had to make adjustments.

(c) **Results achieved**

Candidates were very self-critical of their achievements.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

<p>Paper 9631/03 Textile Applications and Technology</p>
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Key messages

Candidates should take note of the **command** word given at the beginning of the question. **Discuss** and **assess** questions require a more detailed response, with reference to relevant examples as opposed to a list of points.

Questions which require longer written responses should be planned carefully before being answered.

In Paper 3, candidates are expected to know a variety of different fabrics and their suitability for a range of activities such as 'sportswear', for example 'polyester jersey'.

General comments

Responses generally covered the range of questions on the paper with a few areas where a minority of candidates were unable to respond.

It is important that handwriting is neat and legible.

Candidates need to make sure that they read the questions carefully.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were able to state four factors which a designer should consider.
- (b)(i) There was evidence of some really strong design work for this question. The majority of candidates had coloured and labelled their design work and zips were the most popular fastening. There were some original logos designed, however some candidates had included logos which were just words or copies of well-known brands such as 'Adidas' and 'Nike'. Some candidates needed to label the fabric rather than the fibre e.g. 'cotton' or 'nylon'.
 - (ii) This question was answered well with many candidates able to clearly justify their choices.
- (c) This question was answered well by some candidates. Candidates need to think about the more obvious fabric finishes for this question such as easy care, stain/crease/flame and water resistance. Candidates need to make sure that the finishes are suitable for the fabrics they chose in Question 1(b)(i).
- (d) Candidates needed to focus on factors involved in the production of the sports jacket e.g. skills and machinery required rather than on how to produce the logo (method).

Question 2

- (a) Most candidates were able to describe the performance characteristics of both types of yarn.
- (b) Candidates were able to name some speciality yarns. Some candidates needed to develop explanations of how they are used in woven fabrics to create textural effects. Less successful candidates needed to discuss rather than simply list different yarn types.
- (c) The majority of candidates knew the difference between the two different types of dyeing and were able to compare them. Candidates needed to include a wide range of points and provide a detailed comparison to gain marks in the top band.

Question 3

- (a) Candidates needed to discuss rather than provide a list of creative techniques. Candidates tended to focus on techniques such as 'Tie dye', 'Printing' etc. whereas this question was more to do with embellishing a finished pair of jeans with embroidery, beads, lace etc. or using distress techniques. Many candidates needed to discuss these points in some more detail.
- (b) Candidates needed to read the question carefully and use specific examples to assess the influence of fitness for purpose on design. Candidates could have included ideas such as the fabric, finish and use/function of the item.

Question 4

- (a) Candidates were asked to **assess** the importance of product development when creating a fashion collection. Candidates were able to identify ideas such as producing prototypes, market research, consumer views etc. To achieve marks in the higher mark band candidates needed to include a wide range of points and use detailed examples.
- (b) This was answered quite well with candidates focusing more on the production of the skirt rather than on the selection of materials. Candidates needed to focus more on the factors affecting the selection of materials rather than on the production of the skirt e.g. the types of machines available for stitching.

Question 5

- (a) Candidates were able to relate specific fabric finishes to different types of workwear. Less successful candidates needed to relate the different fabric finishes to workwear rather than just providing a list.
- (b) Candidates were confident in their knowledge of how environmental concerns affect the manufacture of textiles. Candidates used a range of examples such as the production of cotton, use of pesticides, chemicals in the sea harming wildlife, carbon footprint, landfill and recycling.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/04
Coursework

Key messages

- The work from centres continues to be a success in terms of creativity and some extremely exciting projects are being produced.
- Repetition is something that needs to be looked at closely within centres. There are some centres where the work produced by different candidates demonstrates the same skill set. In some cases, the same product is produced, but with perhaps a slightly different colour palette, embellishment or pattern. These candidates will not access the top set of marks because they are not demonstrating any further thinking or development. Please consider the skill set that each candidate is demonstrating and ensure that they are creating three different outcomes with little repetition involved.
- Please continue to make sure that no pins are attached to any part of the folder or practical outcomes including mood boards.
- Wires and batteries are not appropriate to attach or use in any work. If a candidate wishes to incorporate electronics of any description in their work the item needs to be logged photographically within their design folder and **not** included for assessment overseas.
- The size of folders should not exceed A3 size and all pages must be securely attached. All work should be labelled correctly to include both centre and candidate number and name. This is extremely important as the volume of work created makes it more difficult to match up the work if labelling is not obvious.
- It was good to see links to sustainability and recycling which are key issues that resonate throughout the world. The work also showed links to the environment and notably plastics in the sea.

General comments

- Certain influences have an impact on choice of products and what might be deemed popular within specific cultures. This is essential in terms of creating and developing, however, it is important that choice of products is not repetitive, too simple or lacking in technical ability. All work should demonstrate a good skill set.
- Use of photographic evidence is encouraged. This evidence helps support candidate's work in terms of embellishment, working samples and of course, the final product.
- Issues of candidates running out of time were apparent particularly on the third product. Careful consideration should be given to size, scale, repetition, etc.. All products should be given equal time and attention as they have equal weighting in terms of the marks awarded.
- Fabric paint is still being used and in certain cases is not appropriate. This medium, if applied incorrectly, transforms a fabric into a hard-stiff surface with little drape. Other methods of applying colour or pattern onto fabric, such as screen, block printing or dye sublimation, would give a superior finish.

Administration

- Please ensure that all three products are sent and are clearly labelled for ease of marking.
- Candidate numbers need to have been written clearly and correctly on all folders and practical work.
- Labels had not been stitched into the construction of the garment and therefore the ability to open the products up fully to assess them was straightforward.
- Packaging of some work can be an issue where work is packed tightly making it difficult to remove the work from the bag.
- Please be mindful of the size of all work being submitted to avoid extremely large and heavy folders of excessive weight
- The size of the folder should be kept to A3 for ease of use. The creating of pages which are busy and informative is to be encouraged as this will enhance the candidates understanding of the design process and will show a more concise method of working. Similarly, for practical outcomes, the larger the item, the heavier it will be. In most cases the skill sets used are very repetitive and this should be discouraged in favour of displaying a greater variety of skills learned.

Research, Aims and Analysis

- The theme of the project is extremely important and can stimulate an exciting project which demonstrates depth and interest. It also allows the candidate to take full ownership of the project.
- It is interesting to look at folders where one theme is used as a base for three different products with a clear co-ordinated outcome. This type of work is generally researched well with a focused range of outcomes produced and allows candidates to make good use of their time..
- Research for the project needs to be balanced in terms of volume and provide candidates with inspirational material.
- Questionnaires must be kept relevant and focused to enable students to reach a conclusion.
- It is important not to include irrelevant research such as the 'History of the Evening-Dress' or even the 'Zip-Fastener'. This information, although technically supportive and interesting, does not support the development of the candidate's folder of work.

Planning and Development

- The folders continue to demonstrate skilful embroidered embellishments which are both sophisticated and well executed.
- Both construction and embellishment development should be demonstrated in folders of work. Some centres need to focus more on the construction development which is just as important as embellishment. In a few cases commercial patterns are used. To access the higher marks there must be a development and modification of this to link with the candidate's design ideas.
- It is important that centres consider the teaching of shape, fabrics, skill sets, time-management, techniques and colour palette when developing products; with an understanding that these need to be developed individually in order to access the higher marks.
- Photographic evidence within the planning and development stage is extremely helpful and is to be encouraged.
- As the piece of work starts to develop it is important for candidates to manage the task carefully. Candidates need to keep their work relevant to the original and intended brief whilst still allowing the time to make changes and modifications.

Process – Carrying out the coursework tasks

- Folders continue to show a variety of both creativity and skill which centres must be congratulated on.
- Most Centres presented products that were well finished and of a high quality. In some cases, the products were extremely marketable.
- Candidates needed to show three different products with a folder of work to support the final outcomes of each in order to access the higher marks

Realisation – Quality of the outcome

- All candidates must design and make three different items, each exhibiting an equal skill set overall and not three versions of the same item. It is important to continually evaluate alongside the design and making process.
- Most final pieces were well executed using, in some cases, fabrics which can be difficult to handle.
- Each centre must carefully consider a balance between construction and embellishment in the work submitted.

Evaluation

- The awarded marks are made up of evaluation and the quality of the folder.
- It is important to continually evaluate the project as it develops.
- All candidates should make sure that they leave enough time at the end to complete all types of work included within the project.

Candidates should continue to follow the points below:

- Consider the original aim of the projects and how this is evidenced in the final outcomes.
- Discuss the outcomes of the task and draw conclusions about the processes used.
- Consider the strengths and weaknesses for each product.
- Consider how effective the choice of techniques, materials, shape and size has been. (This could be annotated within the folder as it develops).
- Consider future developments that could be explored. For example, other items that would fit into the theme or similar products which have been developed further.