

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/01
Fibres, Fabrics and Design

Key Messages

- Candidates must relate their knowledge to the question. For example in **1(e)** the answer should include only those properties of viscose fabrics which would make the fabrics suitable for use in the home.
- A good understanding and knowledge of the properties and names of both fibres and fabrics is needed at this level.

General Comments

The standard of scripts varied as usual, from high to very low. Scripts were generally neatly written and easy to read. A number of candidates did not attempt every part of a question and in some scripts, answers to questions were split with part of the answer at the beginning of the answer booklet and the rest at the end of the script after other questions had been answered.

It is helpful to the Examiner if candidates enter the numbers of the questions answered on the front cover of the examination answer booklet. It is not necessary for candidates to write out the whole question before their answers. Candidates could, instead, highlight key words if they find this helpful. Some answers contained irrelevant information because candidates had not read the question carefully enough. Fibres and fabrics are still confused by some candidates and few candidates seem to know the names of a range of fabrics.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates answered correctly with the source of the fibres but few candidates were able to name the chemicals used in the production of viscose and acetate.
- (b) Few candidates could name fabrics made from viscose and acetate. Viscose fabrics were slightly better known than those made from acetate.
- (c) Candidates generally demonstrated a good knowledge of the performance characteristics of fabrics made from viscose and acetate fibres. Answers were not related to fabrics in many cases because candidates had not named fabrics correctly in part (b). Candidates who did not read the question carefully lost marks because their answers did not refer to the suitability of the fabrics for clothing.
- (d) Some candidates answered this well and were able to explain the different results from microscopic and burning tests for viscose and acetate. Some candidates confused the results of the burning tests and few were able to give details of chemical tests. More answers were correctly given for a chemical test for acetate than for viscose.

- (e) Many candidates did not appear to have read this question carefully and did not restrict their answers to the *additional* characteristics which would be important to consider when choosing viscose fabrics for use in the *home*. Answers were often muddled with performance characteristics repeated from **1 (c)** being given again without any reasons to explain why they would be appropriate for home furnishings rather than clothing. Flammability was the most commonly recognised problem associated with using viscose fabrics in the home. A number of candidates stated incorrectly that waterproofing would be a useful characteristic. The majority of answers lacked sufficient explanation to gain marks above the low band.

Question 2

- (a) This question was well answered with the majority of candidates giving confident explanations of plain weaving and adequate descriptions of pile weaving.
- (b)(i) Fairly well answered. Most candidates understood the processes involved in weaving velvet. Some used good diagrams to illustrate their answers.
- (ii) Many candidates confused this method of weaving with pile weaving and few stated that the loops could be seen on both sides of the fabric.
- (iii) Few candidates could answer this question fully. Most showed a general understanding of weft knitting but could not explain how the fabric became fleece.
- (c) Most candidates ignored the fact that they were supposed to choose a fabric from **2 (b)** and many did not name the non-woven fabric. The two most commonly named non-woven fabrics were Vilene and felt.
- (i) Answers were often muddled because candidates were not able to confidently give names of the fabrics they were describing. Those who described Vilene often included a description of the glue which is applied to iron-on Vilene but which is not a part of the fabric.
- (ii) Answers to this part of the question were very weak with most candidates not able to demonstrate an understanding of which fibres would be used for which fabrics.
- (iii) Most candidates gave a range of uses for knitted fabrics but answers for non-woven fabrics generally lacked detail.

Section B

Question 3

- (a) This question was generally answered well with most candidates showing an understanding of the reasons for changes in fashions.
- (b)(i) This part of the question was not answered well partly because many candidates did not attempt to use pattern effectively in their drawings. Colour was indicated by most candidates but was rarely used imaginatively. A proportion of candidates incorrectly interpreted pattern to mean the style features of the top instead of considering how patterned fabric could be used to enhance their designs. Candidates could have achieved higher marks for this section if they had based the patterns in their designs on specific themes, for example nature or architecture.
- (ii) This section was poorly answered with repetitive generalisations about teenage tastes given as reasons for choices. Some candidates did not answer this section as they had already included reasons for their choices in labelling their designs. Weak design ideas given in **section (b) (i)** also made it difficult for candidates to justify their design choices.
- (c) Answers to this section were vague with few candidates able to refer to specific designers, past or present. Some candidates could describe current fashions which they considered to be retro but could not give details about the original era or designer.

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates who chose this question described in general terms the use of CAD for making patterns in industry and also the use of block patterns made from card. Few candidates gave sufficient detail to gain full marks.
- (b)(i) This question was answered well and most answers were illustrated by well labelled diagrams. Few candidates named the sleeve they were altering.
- (ii) Few candidates who attempted this question named the sleeve style. Most answers showed how to add fullness to the sleeve in some way. Few of the methods suggested for adding fullness would have worked because candidates either did not slash the length of the sleeve before adding fullness or alternatively cut the pattern at right angles to the grain line before making the alterations. Diagrams showing the alteration method generally lacked the necessary pattern markings such as straight grain.
- (c) **Few** candidates received full marks for this question. Most answers focused on the fact that patterns used at home would be made from tissue paper. Answers about industrial patterns were confused with some candidates saying incorrectly that industrial patterns had a seam allowance. No candidates gave the smaller seam allowances used in industry as an answer.
- (d) This question was probably the best answered on the paper. Most candidates knew a range of fastenings and were able to describe their uses in detail.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/02

Practical Test

Key Messages

Centres may send a copy of the test to CIE for our consideration and comment, 6 months before the exam.

Some Centres did not present a balanced mark scheme and certain processes which were completed by all the candidates in the Centre were omitted. 10 marks are awarded for each of the 5 tasks chosen.

Pins should not be left in the garments for health and safety reasons. Labels should be stitched on.

General comments

- Centres chose to make skirts, sleeveless dresses or blouses, tailored tunics and vests (waistcoats). Some of the dresses and vests were lined to a very good standard.
- There were a wide range of processes chosen by the different Centres.
- The standard of work in the Implementation stage has improved. Centres have gained expertise in the use of sewing machines including overlockers.
- For those Centres who provided dress commercial patterns for the candidates, the level of pattern adaptation was disappointing or not present at all. The level of pattern alteration was not challenging for AS Level.
- Some Centres are still concentrating on stitching sections of the garment with time consuming hand sewing which is usually completed by machining.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1 Task Analysis and Planning

- (a) Generally candidates showed a good understanding of the preparation and implementation stages, especially where the Centre had presented the candidates with specific details of what they were expected to do. Vague instructions such as 'alterations and adaptations' gave the candidates little information on what was required of them. Some candidates wrote on the back of the Practical Test Mark Sheets. Extra paper should be provided and attached to the answer paper.
- (b) Candidates presented their shopping requirements as lists in table format. Items were listed with quantities and prices. Fabric alternatives were also listed as were larger resources such as sewing machines.
- (c) Marks were awarded to those candidates who showed knowledge of fabrics and suitable components/notions for the garment they made. Some candidates chose the incorrect length of dress zip. Candidates have chosen to work with a variety of colourful plain and printed cotton and linen fabrics. Synthetics were used for linings. The prints had bold florals and geometrics with strong colour. Embroidered and flocked fabrics were popular.

Question 2 Preparation

- (a) There was excellent adaptation of darts into panelled seams at the bustline, also skirt darts adapted to form a yoke. The disposal of fullness and lining adaptations made for the vests (waistcoats), were challenging and showed skill.

Many candidates using commercial patterns have not made adaptations but simple alterations e.g. lengthening and shortening of the garment or following 2 sizes in a multi sized pattern.

Where candidates were instructed to change dimensions of a pattern piece the finished dimension needs to be noted. Straps were to be widened 2 cms. Candidates understood this as the cutting width and not the finished width e.g. widen the shoulder strap by 2 cms *finished width*.

Candidates who made their own skirt patterns showed many more challenging skills i.e. drafting a complete pattern from the block with style features such as pleats and yokes.

Those candidates who had difficulty in making their own patterns showed little understanding of ease, disposal of fullness and movement needed when the garment is worn. Basic blocks should not be used as patterns. Patterns need to be drafted from the basic blocks.

- (b) Those candidates using commercial patterns are at an advantage when planning the order of work as this is provided in the instruction sheet. Time plans need to show how long the various tasks would take. Some candidates contributed the actual time taken.

- (c) There were good cutting layouts/lay plans drawn by some candidates showing how to cut out the required pattern pieces.

Candidates will not achieve the necessary level of accuracy if they cut the outer and lining fabrics together by hand.

Notches on commercial patterns need to be cut outwards in case of fitting problems.

Carbon marking on the right side of the fabric is not acceptable and if used on the wrong side needs to be of a close colour to the fabric.

- (d) Most Centres provided marks for the fit of the garment. Marks will not be awarded for the fitting if the Centre does not award a mark. Many candidates needed extra time to complete the fitting stage. Toiles/prototypes were made by Centres who made their own patterns, for testing the fit.

Question 3

- (a) Implementation, Organisation and Time Management

Centres who awarded marks for organisation and time management had their marks carried forward.

Where no marks were awarded by the Centre a mark was awarded for the level of completion of the garment.

- (b) Implementation Tasks

- Seams

Curved seams were made to a very good standard as were the continuous seams.

Plain open seams with edge stitching, zigzagging or overlocking were predominately used. Seam allowances where the zip is inserted, need to be finished off.

Candidates are advised to sample the stitch tension and size before machining their garments.

- Disposal of fullness

Darts were well made and stitched to a good point. Machine stitching needs to be secured with reverse stitching. Tied off thread ends are not secure.

Pleats and gathering were misunderstood by some Centres. Gathering is where the fabric is pushed to form fullness along two lines of stitching which has a loose tension. Pleats are folded fabric. There was very good use of gathering in the yoked skirts.

- Yokes

The term 'yoke' usually describes the fitted part of the garment at the shoulders or hips.

Skirt yokes were drafted from basic blocks successfully. Skirt yokes were stitched on to the front and back of the skirt sections first and then seamed at the sides. The yoke is usually worked as one section and then stitched to the skirt as this gives a better fit and appearance.

The blouse yokes needed an opening at the neckline for taking the garment on and off.

- Facings

There was misunderstanding of the differences between a facing and a binding.

A facing is a cut shaped piece of fabric which lies flat inside (or outside for decoration) the edge which it finishes.

A binding is cut on the cross grain and is a strip of fabric which covers or binds the edge. It may show as a design feature or may be hidden on the inside edge.

Interfaced facings cut from lining fabric were generally attached successfully. The seam allowances needed grading and snipping to form a good curve and to enable the facing to lie flat. Understitching needs to be close to the seam so the facing rolls to the inside. Many of the facing ends were not completed at the opening.

- Collars

Where a collar has to be turned back the underside needs to be cut on the bias/cross grain. Collars were finished off poorly with candidates not knowing how to stitch down the inside edge. Hand stitching would have been appropriate here.

- Plackets

Most candidates did not know how to complete the overlap at the bottom of the opening/placket. They successfully stitched in the right and left sides of the opening.

- Sleeves

Close fitting sleeves made from a woven fabric need to have darting at the elbow for ease of movement. There was poor marking of the crown, front and back of the sleeve which did not help the setting in process.

- Straps

The term 'bodice' usually describes the part of the garment at the chest/bustline to waist.

Skirt usually describes the part of the garment from the waist to the floor.

Straps were generally made well and inserted into the outer fabric and lining of the bodices. Some candidates attached the straps to the completed bodice.

- Fastenings

There were some highly successful results of machined invisible zips. Most were tacked in by hand. This is difficult to achieve since these zippers are designed to be machine stitched in. The opening edges of the garment should be in line with the zip stopper. The invisible zip needs to be machined in before the seam is sewn.

On the plackets snap fasteners were stitched in poorly with large loose stitches. Buttons and buttonholes would have been more appropriate.

- Hems

There were few good examples of hemming. In many cases a narrow machined hem would have been suitable and quick to complete. Many hems were left raw and those which were completed were hand stitched in a hurry using far too big a stitch.

Question 4 Evaluation

Candidates have written their strengths and weaknesses in relation to their practical outcomes, making suggestions for improvement and justifying their decisions. Some candidates found the exam easy, whilst others experienced difficulties in the exam stating disappointment with their results.

They experienced difficulties with the sewing machines and resources available to them. The main weakness of the candidates was mainly in their time management.

Where their evaluations were descriptive of the processes they sometimes lacked emphasis on what their strengths and weaknesses were and there was little suggestion for improvement.

Some candidates could not recognise any weaknesses and thought they had done well when there were obvious mistakes.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/03

Textile Applications and Technology

General comments:

Candidates followed the rubric throughout and answered the required four questions. The majority of candidates used the silhouette provided on the last page of the question paper, which meant that the size of the sketches were appropriate to show design details and annotation. However, where the silhouette was not used (e.g. with **Question 5**) the answers were not so detailed as they tended to be smaller and detailed design ideas could not be shown adequately. Candidates should also use the number of marks in each part question, as a guide to how much they should write. Some candidates were still confusing 'fibres' and 'fabrics' especially when including names of 'fabrics' in their answers. A 'fabric' (e.g. cotton poplin) would have a fibre content (i.e. cotton) and the construction detail (e.g. poplin which is a variation of a plain weave). As this is an advanced level subject, candidates should use the correct terminology.

Section A

Question 1 (compulsory)

- (a) This was mostly well-answered. The majority of answers included 'safety and hygiene' points and points about 'regulations' according to the type of work; fitness for purpose, type of climate, and colour schemes were also often included.
- (b)(i) Almost all answers gave the named occupation; the sketches varied according to the occupation chosen: popular choices included: work wear for food industries, mechanics/factory work. Several answers understood the 'overalls' to mean office wear, and this was accepted where answers included relevant types of work. Annotations were expected and full marks were awarded to a large number of answers which had included back/front views and were well-annotated.
- (ii) This answer varied with a number of candidates not referring correctly to the word 'fabric' specification points, and instead, referring to the 'garment' specification points. The fabric specification points include points such as: type of fibres content (e.g. cotton, or polyester or a blend); the type of construction of the fabric (e.g. woven fabric, with a plain or twill weave). The colour, care, properties and fabric finishes of the fabric were usually correctly included as in many cases, the answers would be the same as for the garment.
- (iii) A few answers gained full marks for 'two suitable fabrics' but a large number of candidates gave only the fibre content (e.g. 'cotton' or 'polyester') and did not refer to the fabric itself (e.g. 'cotton twill', or 'polyester gabardine'). The correct fabric name is expected at Advanced Level.
- (c) This was usually well-answered and quite a number of scripts gained marks in the middle to high band.

Question 2 (compulsory)

- (a) This was usually well answered and many scripts gained full marks.
- (b) Many candidates sketched two bags, and showed well-labelled design details. The most popular styles of bag were evening-type bags. However, quite a number of answers had not included 'free machining' which normally uses an embroidery hoop so that the teeth below the needle can be disengaged and the hoop can be moved freely to give a more creative design, which does not rely so heavily on straight lines. This technique is listed in the subject syllabus. There were however, a number of very well-answered questions which gained full marks. Excellent details of types of yarns were included with front and back views with detailed annotations.

- (c) A number of answers wrote detailed instructions of working 'free machining' and gained full marks. Many answers though, had not included details about marking the position of the design on the fabric, or by reinforcing the fabric (e.g. adding interfacing to the back). This would depend on the type of fabric used. Points about thread colour and type were often included.
- (d) Answers varied from brief to detailed and the 'range of materials' included many examples of different uses of techniques. This topic is generally well-known with many answers giving well-informed discussions. However, quite a number of answers included just a list of materials and these were not adequately discussed, so few marks were gained. At advanced level, answers should include details and specific examples. Many questions gained marks in the middle band.

Section B

Question 3

This question was chosen by a large number of candidates.

- (a) This section was usually well-answered although some scripts had not made clear which 'special gift' had been selected nor had enough detail been included. Labelling was sometimes very brief. At advanced level, detailed labelling of style features is expected.
- (b)(i) There were variable answers in this section. The question was expecting a detailed 'product' specification for one item. Quite a few candidates had given general points about fabric, components, etc. rather than for one specific item. This area of study is listed in the syllabus.
- (ii) This section was usually well-answered and where reasons given were detailed, full marks were awarded.
- (c) Comparison of 'a sample item' and 'a batch of fifty items' was well-answered in a few cases although in many answers, points were listed for both but had not been adequately compared so full marks could not be awarded. Most answers were in the middle band.

Question 4

- (a)(i) Answers varied and many candidates correctly gave some information although only a few managed to score full marks. Some answers were very brief and scored few if any marks.
- (ii) This section produced better answers although some scripts gave only very sketchy answers about dry cleaning symbols. At advanced level, candidates should be familiar with the circle symbols, within which are the letters: A, or P, or F and the types of fabrics on which each can be found. Detailed answers were able to give details of the different dry cleaning fluids used and explain why it is necessary to have a range.
- (b) This was usually well answered and a good number of candidates scored marks in the high band. Some answers only listed the types of trimmings so less marks were awarded. There were also some very good sketches to illustrate the answers.
- (c) There were variable answers for this section. Most candidates included points about evaluating an item although discussion was often limited and specific examples were not always given. Relevant points were given in many answers although only a few scripts achieved marks in the high band.

Question 5

- (a) Quite a number of answers had not used the silhouette shape on the question paper as a guide for the sketches. The quality of answers varied but a number of candidates scored full marks. Often the same trouser designs had been used and different decorative closures (fastenings) had been added, although the question asked for two different designs. Labelling varied from very brief to detailed.
- (b) Answers to this section were good in general and many scripts scored marks in the middle to high band.

- (c) This section on manufacturing was usually known although answers were brief in some cases and not always well explained. Low scoring answers often just wrote a list of points.
- (d) Answers to this varied, however those who attempted it knew some relevant points and marks were awarded in all bands (low, middle and high).

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/04
Coursework

Key Messages

In some cases, candidates had mentioned that they had produced samples but there was no evidence in their folders so marks could not be awarded.

A weak area in some folders was the lack of specific aims of the project and very brief planning, as not enough detailed planning had been done and particularly the development sections were brief. Development work needs to show evidence of creativity and all samples need to be included in the folder for marking.

Some of the work submitted did not follow the details in the syllabus and candidates work was submitted which was not relevant to the projects.

A reminder to Centres that the work submitted must be the work of the individual candidates and they should sign to say that is so. However, in the rare occurrence that part of the work has been carried out by someone else, this must be made clear in the project and notes which accompany the work.

General Comments

There was some excellent work submitted with a variety of different titles (e.g. based on natural forms, architecture, or other related themes) and a wide range of textile items, often garments for the candidates or for a child, and in a few cases, items for the home (e.g. cushions, etc.).

Some of the work was not individually labelled, it is recommended that all work is labelled securely as it is not always clear from looking at the work as to which folder it belongs to if it is separated. Some labels were not securely stitched and labels were coming away from the items of work.

It is helpful when the mark sheets and summary sheet are stapled together (this was not always the case).

A few of the items submitted were very large (e.g. large pictures A1 size or bigger) with hard frames. Other items such as quilts for beds which are more than 1 metre square are very large. It is not necessary for candidates to make such large items which add to weight/cost/packaging. It is possible to plan to make quality items which are smaller yet still show a wide range of textile techniques.

A small number of Centres had submitted work which had used motifs which were not original and this should be avoided. In some cases this was from commercial paper patterns and in a very few cases only, the motifs used looked as if they were copyrighted images from the Internet which had been only slightly modified. The candidate(s) in question were marked in the normal way with an amended mark for the 'creativity' section. Centres are reminded that the work submitted must show creativity and originality. It was obvious from the research sections that information had been found and used from the Internet but had not always been acknowledged. Centres need to be reminded that all Internet sources need to be acknowledged.

It is also helpful when candidates have a 'contents page' in which page numbers are given.

It is recommended that the syllabus is closely followed so that the coursework includes all the sections required.

Candidates often wrote very brief evaluations - this is an area which needs to be written in detail as there are a significant number of marks for this section. The quality of written English contained grammatical errors in a few cases and if the text is word-processed, errors can be corrected before the text is printed.

Many candidates presented their work in A3 folders but had not always made the best use of the pages. It is quite acceptable to use both sides of the pages, not just facing pages. Quite a few folders from different Centres had not made the best use of the space on the pages and had stuck one sample with brief text on a large page and had left a lot of empty space.

Some of the work was beautifully presented and the standard of finish on the samples practical items was excellent. In other cases, the final items were well made but the folders were much briefer and had not always given enough time to all the sections required. The syllabus should be followed carefully and appropriate amount of time should be given to different sections of the coursework, in line with the allocation of marks.

Some folders had included photographs of the making process effectively and this helped to make clear, the stages of making. A few folders had submitted photographs which were out-of-focus – it is recommended that if photographs are included, they are of good quality.

Overall, some Centres had submitted excellent work and it was clear that candidates had spent a lot of time on their projects and had produced work of an excellent standard, worthy of a high grade. Centres are to be congratulated for this.