



General Certificate of Secondary Education

**Design and Technology
(Textiles Technology) 3547/F**

Full Course

Foundation Tier

Report on the Examination

2008 examination - June series

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General Comments

The overall standard was improved on last year with all papers eliciting a wide range of marks, suggesting that most candidates had been entered for the correct tier in relation to ability. Most candidates attempted all of the questions and scripts were usually well presented and easy to follow.

The theme appeared to have been well received and researched by candidates, and examiners saw a very wide variety of products, especially hat designs. There were also many ideas for decorative products and examiners accepted a wide range of different designs inspired by hats. The majority of candidates understand the importance of showing colour as opposed to simply labelling it, and there are very few who do not use coloured pencils; full colour is such an important feature in the presentation of textiles design ideas.

Basic knowledge of fabric properties and construction continues to be a concern although, candidates are quite good at suggesting appropriately named fabrics for their design ideas – some of this knowledge should have been used when answering those questions based directly on fibre and fabric knowledge.

There are still concerns that some centres are teaching to the preparation sheet only, and not to the specification as a whole; this does not help candidates achieve high marks on papers which are designed to test broad knowledge and understanding of textiles technology. Centres are also reminded that the information given in the preparation sheet is to support candidates in preparing for the design questions, and that other questions on the paper will be outside of the scope of the set theme; this is clearly stated in the specification.

Full Course Foundation Tier

The paper was structured so that shorter answers were required, and this style seemed to help the candidates to access the paper and gain higher marks, with fewer falling into the lower mark banding. The majority had been able to complete the paper, showing good use of time, good preparation and revision. There were still some almost empty papers from candidates who attempted questions one and two with little attempt at the rest. Handwriting seemed clearer which enabled markers to have a better chance of understanding the points the candidates were trying to make. Several candidates did, however, continue in pencil after answering the design question.

The theme gave candidates a wide scope for designing a product of their own choice, although most chose the “exciting fashion hat”. Those who chose a decorative product tended to use a hat shape on a product, usually a cushion or a bag. Many candidates took 20th century inspiration to mean late 20th century, and many hats were based on baseball caps and beanie hats based on what they wear and make in school.

Question 1(ai)

This was well answered with the majority of candidates gaining full marks by showing understanding that the colours, stuffed bird, and size of the hat would not be considered popular today.

Question 1(aii)

Most candidates were awarded a mark for suggesting that the shape and/or feathers could be used within a modern design.

Question 1(bi)

Many candidates were able to give an advantage but struggled to give a disadvantage, tending to concentrate on the fact that nothing would be modern or fashionable. Reasons for going, or not going to a museum were often given, rather than advantages and disadvantages.

Question 1(bii)

This section was not answered well and responses were often confused. The DVD was often interpreted as an educational DVD on how to make hats, or an old film with no relevance to hats.

Question 1(ci)

Responses were mixed with the majority gaining one mark. Specific detail about manufacturing methods and considerations was often lacking.

Question 1(cii)

A mixed response with many candidates giving well thought out responses whilst others merely stated that it would be to "find out about the target market".

Question 1(ciii)

This part was answered well on the whole with candidates often referring to the manufacturers' profit and customer affordability.

Question 2 (ai)

There was some strong evidence of good research but many of the ideas presented were copied or tried and tested ones with the addition of a feather. Some candidates had obviously done additional research and were able to show good, innovative ideas. The majority chose to show a design for a hat rather than a decorative product. Where a decorative product was chosen it was often contrived e.g. a cushion with a picture of a hat on it. The initial ideas were often fully annotated and in colour but a lot were similar, with only minor modifications to the shape or decoration.

Question 2 (aii)

This section was usually done well with the majority gaining full marks. Answers varied greatly, from simple statements such as 'colourful, eye-catching', to detailed thoughts relating to the product idea and the intended market.

Question 2 (b)

This question was answered well on the whole; centres are obviously ensuring that candidates are well prepared for this section of the paper. There were many hats that were straight copies of current fashions with added features such as a feather. The originality and inspiration from the 20th century was very weak in the majority of cases but there were some innovative and sensational designs. Not many made reference to their source of inspiration, nor to any past designers or research. Most candidates used colour to present their ideas and annotated well, enabling markers to understand their design ideas.

Question 3 (a)

There was a varied response to this question with many candidates simply writing 'CAD/CAM' and mentioning research without any qualification. The internet and the use of design programmes were the most popular uses cited. Very few referred to the ability to manipulate designs/colours and there were many responses where research and development had been confused.

Question 3 (bi)

The vast majority of candidates were able to name a suitable method of decoration.

Question 3 (bii)

Most gave valid reasons for their choice of technique and some referred back to the design brief.

Question 3 (biii)

This question was not answered as well with many candidates making reference to general testing, e.g. flammability/washing tests, that they had carried out in the classroom.

Question 3 (ci)

Candidates were often able to give four accurate manufacturing costs and many gained full marks. Some were confused and gave a list of prices, e.g. £10.00, £20.00.

Question 3 (cii)

A number of candidates referred to recycling as a way of reducing manufacturing costs probably because the focus of the 2007 paper was recycling. Answers to this question were of a very mixed standard but most were awarded at least one mark.

Question 4

The whole of this question was generally well answered and high marks achieved.

Question 4 (a)

Candidates had a good put forward clear advantages and disadvantages with many gaining full marks. A few candidates misunderstood the question resulting in poor marks.

Question 4 (b)

Candidates understood why products are packaged and were able to give detailed answers with the majority awarded full marks.

Question 4 (c)

This question was misunderstood by a number of candidates but the majority of responses were sound, with many referring to environmental issues as a reason why products should not be packaged.

Question 5 (a)

Most candidates understood that this was a question relating to the properties of cotton and answers were generally good. However, many concentrated on the fact that it was a product for a child and commented on safety issues, e.g. "it can be put in a baby's mouth", "it is suitable for a baby" or "it is not dangerous".

Question 5 (bi)

This question was generally well answered with most responses relating to the fabric being smooth and shiny. There was some misunderstanding with a number of candidates referring to the child being able to lift the flower or that it needs to be attached firmly.

Question 5 (bii)

Not always answered well. Most referred to its cleaning properties.

Question 5 (c)

Velcro was well known for its safety and ease of use and most responses were worthy of full marks. Some were under the misapprehension that it is a cheap fastening.

Question 5 (d)

Many candidates seemed to use their coursework experience of making an activity book or a play mat as they had some very good ideas of how the pages could be made to make a sound or noise. Lots of examples were given including squeakers and more sophisticated methods of making noises and recording of voices.

Question 6 (ai)

Most candidates were able to give two suitable methods of lettering but some did not seem to realise that the question was about manufacturing of the product, not research.

Question 6 (aii)

This question was not answered well, as many failed to discuss how technology could be used for the chosen technique, giving answers such as “quick”, “do it for you”, “print off” or “choosing the correct font”, rather than referring to the accuracy of placement and specific ways in which computer technology can help with the technique.

Question 6 (bi)

This question was not answered well; many candidates referred to quality control and failed to address the specific problem of the corners. The majority made reference to accurate measuring, cutting or adding a card insert. Very few gained full marks for this question.

Question 6 (bii)

There was some confusion between this question and part (iii) with many referring to the bottom edge of the flower. Candidates did, however, understand that there was the need for double stitching/strengthening of the fraying edges.

Question 6 (biii)

Most candidates gained more marks for this question, with the majority referring to double stitching and reversing of stitching at the ends to give additional strength.

Question 6 (c)

This question was generally well answered with the majority referring to safety and quality issues. Nearly all candidates gained at least one mark.

Question 6 (di)

There was a general lack of knowledge about the safety labelling for the activity book. Very few responses were worthy of two marks although there were lots of guesses about the meaning of CE. Some candidates were awarded one mark as they guessed that the label must be related to safety because it was on a child’s toy.

Question 6 (dii)

The meaning of the Lion Mark was also poorly understood with many thinking that the making of the book had not involved any cruelty to animals, or that it was a story about a lion.

Question 7 (a)

Candidates were able to give valid properties of polyester in relation to its suitability for the bag. Some answers referred to it being safe for a child rather than specific fabric properties.

Question 7 (b)

There were some good responses with the majority referring to strength and neatness. Weaker responses referred to “keeping it all together”.

Question 7 (c)

A significant number of candidates appear not to be aware of what a component is, and there were many references to fabrics, handles, equipment and techniques. Many answers lacked detail of the components or did not explain the need for them on the bag. Fastenings were the most popular component selected.

Question 7 (d)

Many candidates repeated themselves on this question but generally “flammable” was the main answer. The majority gained one mark.

Question 7 (e)

This question had a mixed response with many candidates having a clear understanding of the issues associated with overseas manufacture, whilst others simply referred to them as being “cheap” but not knowing why. Many responses were not awarded more than three marks as they lacked detail to explain the advantages and disadvantages given.

Many had clear awareness of the moral or ethical stances on sweatshops, child labour, poor working conditions in factories, and the low wages.

Question 7 (f)

Most candidates were able to give two sound reasons for the price reduction.