



## **General Certificate of Secondary Education**

*Design and Technology  
(Textiles Technology) Short Course  
3557F*

## **Report on the Examination**

*2007 examination – June series*

*Short Course Foundation Tier*

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## **General Comments**

Candidates used the theme as inspiration for a wide variety of products; being allowed a free choice did not appear to have had any detrimental effect on candidates' performance. Examiners were, at times, disappointed with the results as it seemed that many candidates had not researched the topics given on the Preparation Sheet thoroughly and this lack of preparation affected performance in a number of questions. Basic knowledge of fabric properties and construction was surprisingly lacking in the answers given to some questions. It would appear that many candidates do not use knowledge and experience gained in coursework to help them when answering questions requiring knowledge of manufacturing processes.

Many examiners reported having awarded some very low marks, more so than in previous years, suggesting that some centres had incorrectly entered candidates for Higher Tier papers. However, most candidates responded well, attempting all of the questions, and producing some very original design ideas. A wide variety of products was seen across all four papers; there were many novel designs, practical and otherwise, using the theme in imaginative ways. There were also many predictable designs such as shorts, bags and cushions made from cut down denim jeans, and some inappropriate use of components, e.g. sweet wrappers, old CDs, plastic bottles. A minority of candidates seemed to lose sight of the fact that this is a textiles examination, producing designs made completely from metal, plastics and card.

Although the majority of candidates understand the importance of showing colour as opposed to simply labelling it, there are still some candidates who do not use coloured pencils, even though it is stated on the front cover of the paper that this is necessary. Full colour is an important feature in the presentation of the final design.

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. Many candidates also rely far too heavily on Preparation Sheet images when presenting their ideas for the design question; centres are reminded that the Preparation Sheet should be regarded as a starting point, and that candidates are expected to research beyond what has been presented to them as inspiration.

## **Short Course Foundation Tier**

### **Question 1**

This question was generally well answered.

- (a) There were, however, many generalised and vague answers, often referring to the making of a new garment from recycled fabric / denim or components, but lacking detail.
- (b) Most candidates gained the mark available here.
- (c) The majority of candidates included deliberate rips, holes and tears as appropriate methods.

## **Question 2**

- (a)(i) Ideas and sketches shown were often weak and poorly presented although there were usually two different ideas; very few showed the same product with different decoration or two different products with no decoration.  
The designs were occasionally original but most were not; re-using denim jeans was a common theme.
- (ii) Reasons for choice were often fairly basic with responses referring to products being colourful, fashionable or looking attractive.  
Explanations of the reason given were often vague and related to candidates' own preferences rather than why the product would sell well. There were some references to environmental issues and recycling. Few candidates achieved two marks.
- (b) As with the Full Course, there was a good standard of presentation with the vast majority of candidates showing a coloured front and back view of their design, together with annotation and occasional exploded views. There was a fairly equal split between garments / accessories and furnishing products. Many candidates clearly indicated where they had used recycled products and gave the source, but few referred to the fibre content or fabric type. Marks were lost here because of limited references to recycling.  
The majority of designs were weak with many being variations on existing products, and a small minority of candidates included products made from metal, wood and plastic, losing sight of the fact that it was a textiles examination.

## **Question 3**

- (a)(i) The vast majority of candidates were able to name an appropriate decorative technique with appliqué and patchwork the most popular. Many, however, referred to decorations rather than a technique.
- (ii) Explanations of suitability were, on the whole, poor with only simple statements given, such as "it looks good", rather than a detailed answer.
- (b)(i) Most candidates were able to name an appropriate component, but then did not gain the a mark because they failed to give any detail. There were a number who thought that pockets are a component.
- (ii) As with the selection of a decorative technique, explanations of suitability were poor.

## **Question 4**

- (a) Responses were poor with many candidates simply repeating the statement in a different format or agreeing with it. Many did not recognise the differences between the different types of pollution. Animal and human welfare were often incorrectly given as reasons why pesticides should not be used.
- (b)(i) Very well done with the vast majority of candidates gaining full marks.
- (ii) Not as well done as part (i), as reasons were given in vague terms and most answers limited to simple comments such as "non-biodegradable" and "cannot be recycled". Here again, there were many references to animal welfare.

- (iii) The majority of candidates were familiar with the recycling symbol but many failed to gain two marks as they did not explain anything other than “recycle”. Many candidates referred to the product rather than the packaging.

### **Question 5**

- (a) Many candidates had little knowledge of fabric construction resulting in them achieving only one or no marks; many answers appeared to have been guesswork.
- (b)(i) & (ii) These questions were answered very badly resulting by the majority of candidates. Many gave the advantages of CAD and CAM rather than explaining how they might be used by the designer and fabric manufacturer; others referred to cutting and sewing the product rather than the printing of the fabric.
- (iii) Weak responses were seen by the examiners, with many references to sewing rather than printing the fabric.

### **Question 6**

- (a) There was a very mixed response to this question and evidence that many had struggled to work out the correct stages of manufacture. Some candidates gave an order of work that was impossible, eg. the zip was applied before the seam was stitched, whilst others achieved full marks. The quality control checks were much better, with the majority of candidates achieving higher marks in this section than on the stages of manufacture. There were some references to classroom safety, for example “do not cut yourself” or “be careful not to stab yourself with a needle”. There were many repetitions in the two columns.
- (b)(i)&(ii) Although very few candidates were sure what sub-assembly meant they were able to give a correct example.
- (c) This question was answered quite well but, as with the Full Course, there was some confusion between classroom and industrial safety practices. Most candidates were aware of how to improve the safety of workers when using a band-saw / band-knife and gave points specific to them rather than general answers relating to machinery. A high proportion of candidates gained full marks.
- (d) Candidates identified that there would be less decoration and fewer processes but were unable to articulate that this would mean the manufacturing stage would be quicker or more efficient. On the whole, the question was well answered and many candidates achieved full marks.
- (e) Mostly correct answers were seen, although some candidates had difficulty with the calculations, especially relating to the quantity of fabric needed. This was sometimes incorrect, or the wrong unit of measurement was given or omitted entirely.
- (f)(i) The dangers were well understood and documented and many answers achieved two marks here.
- (ii) Electrical dangers were less well understood and few achieved more than one mark.

- (iii) Dangers associated with fork lift trucks were not clearly documented and few candidates earned more than one mark here. Most responses were more concerned with damage to property rather than potential injuries, or death, for co-workers.

### **Question 7**

- (a)(i) Most candidates were able to give relevant qualities of cotton which make it suitable for the cushion but little detail was included. There was a tendency to refer to the construction of the fabric, cost and perceived weight.
- (ii)&(iii) There was little evidence of knowledge of fabric finishes and hence there were very few answers which merited credit. Most referred to adding other fabrics, using softeners or ironing the fabric.
- (b) The washing and ironing symbols were generally well known but candidates often failed to give the correct ironing temperature or to even refer to it.