



GCE

PRODUCT DESIGN: TEXTILES

TEXT1

Report on the Examination

1561

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The paper had a variety of questions requiring short answers, sketches and longer responses and appeared to have been well received by students.

The overall standard of responses seen was disappointing this year; especially for Section A where many of the topics had appeared on recent papers; many answers were of a superficial level and lacked detail. It was noticeable that a high proportion of students used material from the 2014 mark scheme when responding to questions on this paper even though the questions were different.

Students need to understand that, whilst the mark schemes are detailed and may prove useful revision aids, the questions will be different and will require different material in the answers.

There is a wealth of support material for this specification on the e-AQA website, the questions and mark scheme allowed for a wide range of different answers and many of the topics had appeared on past examination papers. But despite all of this support for students taking this examination, answers showed insufficient knowledge and understanding of the specification content.

Centres and students do need to start preparing for this paper at the very start of the course and continue to teach and practise using the subject content throughout. The previous year's mark scheme on its own does not constitute adequate revision and preparation.

Scripts were mostly well presented with labelled diagrams used to explain various points. Diagrams can often help students explain things that they might find difficult through the use of written communication alone.

Teachers and students entering for future examinations are advised to study past papers and mark schemes and the relevant examiner's report in order to become familiar with the requirements. Practising answering questions within a limited time can help students to plan their time in examinations.

Section A

Question 1

- 1(a)** Most students recognised the structure as knitting although not all specified wet knitting.
- 1(b)** This part of the question was not well answered with a high proportion of students incorrectly labelling the rows as warp and weft.
- 1(c)** Those students who responded through one-word answers did not score as well as those who explained their points. Many did not appear to realise that it is the fibre content that makes a fabric soft and the use of *comfortable* as a catch-all benefit does not convey any meaning whatsoever.

Question 2

Many students were challenged by this question. Even if they did recognise the symbols they were unable to explain their meaning. This was especially true for the Lion Mark and the Conformatée Européene marks, and whilst many knew the hand wash label they were unable to give sufficient detail for the award of the second mark.

Question 3

- 3(a)** Many students found it difficult to explain adequately what is meant by a basic block with a number simply repeating the question. This should not have posed a problem as basic blocks are used in coursework projects.
- 3(b)** This part of the question was generally well answered.

Question 4

Most students are aware that a computerised layout saves fabric but often the other two points gave this same information in a different way. Students lost marks on this question because *quick* and *cheap* are not acceptable answers unless they are well explained.

Question 5

This topic has appeared on previous papers yet few students understand the role of the BSI with the majority thinking that they carry out quality control tests on every product made. Markers tried to interpret the points made and give credit wherever possible but still, achievement was low.

Section B

Question 6

- 6(a)** Most students correctly explained that a staple fibre is short and examiners saw some very detailed explanations for 1 mark.
- 6(b)** Students understood the most obvious ways that the absorbency of cotton affects products and gave some very good examples to illustrate the points made. Many were under the mistaken belief that absorbency causes the fabric to crease.
- 6(c)(i)** This was well answered with most students identifying brushing as an appropriate finish and allowing them to go on and score marks in parts (ii) and (iii). There were, however, some very strange recommendations, some of which appeared to be linked to cotton's high absorbency.
- (c)(ii)** Accurate detail was provided by those students who correctly named brushing in part (i) of the question.
- (c)(iii)** Most referred to weakening of the fabric and many were aware of the increased flammability of brushed cotton fabrics.
- 6(d)** Denim, corduroy and gingham were the most popular fabric selected and there were some detailed and accurate descriptions. Many students became side-tracked, describing the properties and uses of the fabrics rather than the fabric itself. Seersucker and Broderie Anglaise were less popular choices but when selected, the descriptions were usually very accurate.

Question 7

- 7(a)** Many students showed good knowledge of the twill weave and the properties of wool which they related to the product. Some answers lacked detail and were limited in scope.
- 7(b)(i)** There were some good descriptions of different ways of producing a non-woven fabric and many were awarded full marks.
- 7(b)(ii)** This part of the question was not answered well with accounts often consisting of the reasons why disposable products are used rather than the properties of non-woven fabrics. Only the most obvious examples were given and some of those would not be made from non-woven fabrics, e.g. plastic gloves. Many answers developed into a diatribe about the benefits to the environment but many of the points made were questionable.
- 7(c)** As with any question about blends, students describe the properties of the individual fibres but do not consider their combined effects or their impact on the product. Many had good knowledge of polyester but were less clear about viscose, especially in relation to strength and care. Some showed good understanding that the thermoplastic qualities of polyester would allow for special effects in a fashion top but there is still much confusion about how this relates to care.

Section C**Question 8**

- 8(a)** This part was answered well by the majority of students who were able to pick out a range of features and analyse their appropriateness in terms of winter sportswear. Those who simply described the features did not score as highly.
- 8(b)** There were many good explanations of the appropriateness of both the polyester fibre and the plain weave and these were related to sporting activities. But the polyamide lining was a problem for many as they could not find any different properties to write about and often resorted to giving the advantages of a lining.
- 8(c)** Students have a good understanding of the concept of insulation and they provided some detailed accounts which included both the structure and the feather and down filling, allowing many responses to be awarded full marks. Many of the more able students also referred to the decorative effect of the quilting and its part in keeping the filling evenly distributed throughout the jacket.
- 8(d)** Most answers referred to the strength of the thread but included little else of merit. Common errors related to the availability of different colours, the stretchiness rather than the *give*, and the apparent low cost of the thread.
- 8(e)** This question was not answered well as students have little understanding of what happens to polyester fabric when it eventually sets alight, often describing it as very flammable. The concept of air, from the filling, supporting burning was very rarely considered. There were many incorrect points relating to the lack of moisture to put out a fire, and the oil-based nature of polyester which would cause it to ignite quickly.

- 8(f)** Students showed very little understanding of the scenario presented, as many were under the impression that potential buyers of the jacket would need to remove it from the bag to try it on in the shop. Accounts included limited references to the bag aiding storage in the shop and keeping the jacket in pristine condition but there was little else. A high number of students thought that the buyer might store the jacket in the bag at home – which is unlikely – and that it would protect stock from damage in the event of a fire in the shop. The impact of disposing of the bag on the environment was not well understood as many thought that the polyester fabric would disintegrate easily.
- 8(g)** Examiners saw some well thought out modifications which were shown in detail by some students. A removable hood and zipped outer pockets were the most common modifications seen although there were some which included wearable electronics, which were well justified in terms of cost and appropriateness for the end user. Weaker responses lacked clarity and detail and modifications were not always appropriate.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

[UMS conversion calculator](#)