



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
June 2011**

**Design and Technology: TEXT2
Textiles**

(Specification 2560)

**Unit 2: Learning Through Designing and
Making**

Report on Moderation

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Introduction

It has been another excellent year and this popular specification continues to attract new centres. The interpretation of the specification, the standard of work, the presentation of design folders and the application of the assessment criteria continues to be impressive across the ability range.

An increased number of centres have adopted a portfolio approach, selecting the best examples of work from a number of projects to satisfy each of the five criteria and putting these together into a single folder. This is not the only way to generate appropriate design and make evidence but it can help to provide a suitably varied experience for students in the first of this two year course. It was very evident that candidates had enjoyed this approach.

There has been a significant increase in the range of work included in the portfolios, with the addition of many short, exciting activities including entries for national competitions, accessory, home furnishing, wall hangings, educational products and toy design.

Administration

In general, centres' administration was excellent, following the instructions and advice given correctly. It would be helpful if the work was sent in rank order and the folders carefully labelled with relevant information.

Candidate Record Forms (CRFs)

An excellent feature of this year's entry was the Candidate Record Forms which were generally excellent. Candidates had taken this task very seriously and identified precisely where supporting evidence could be found.

Applying the Standard

- There was an improvement in the accuracy of teachers assessments with few falling outside of the tolerance;
- Centres who adopted the portfolio approach were much more accurate in assessing the work and applying the standard.
- some centres are marking low ability candidates severely;

Presentation of work for moderation

A variety of methods were used by candidates to present their work: Windows Power Point presentations are becoming much more popular. Very few presented work other than A3 plastic flip folders and sketchbooks.

Portfolio folders were much more cohesive and included introduction/contents pages, with detail of the individual tasks. Work was mostly presented as individual tasks with clear annotation as to which of the criterion it was meeting. In most cases the portfolio included one or two design and make projects plus additional activities which were added to fulfil all areas of the assessment criteria. It was encouraging to see that candidates are now selecting carefully the evidence that best meets the criteria. In the past many have included everything.

A number of centres that produced a single project also included sample/sketchbooks to supplement their work. These were interesting to look at and a valuable resource for the candidates' future use.

Centres submitting work on disc was done well and should be considered by all in the future. The almost exclusive use of Windows Power Point presentations presented few problems; however, they should include contents list, page/slide numbers and headings.

Although photographic evidence in folders is not an AQA requirement there was an extended use of photographs with many images included during the development stage and in a making diary.

Meeting the assessment criteria

Criterion 1. Investigation and Clarification of Problems

This criterion was generally met very well with candidates carrying out sufficient research and investigation to inspire them in the early stages of designing. Very few candidates continue to present too much material.

Candidates performed well when:

- research was comprehensive, focused and organised in a logical way;
- a wide range of sources of information was used not just secondary information especially when downloaded from the internet or cut out from magazines;
- they provided analytic annotation for their findings rather than descriptive;
- customer profiles including their needs/choices/ideas featured at the start of the work and were then referred to when ideas were evaluated;
- they understood the purpose of mood boards and trend forecasts and used them to inspire their designing;
- existing designs and inspirational material were given a relevance when analysed or explained;
- candidates showed clear understanding and were able to extract criteria which were presented in focused specifications;
- further research and experimentation is presented as the ideas are developed towards a final product;

Criterion 2. Development of Design Proposal

We have seen the greatest improvement in this criterion with many more candidates understanding that the objective is to develop ideas and produce original designs. Some were highly creative and showed originality whereas others were copies of existing products. Strong centres showed highly complex development with pattern making and a wide variety of both decorative and construction techniques tested and proved to be appropriate for the designs. There was an improvement in planning the development of ideas along with detailed manufacturing plans. Very few candidates presented theoretical notes covering health and safety, methods of manufacture and sustainability. It is becoming common practice for these aspects to be included as an integral part and related directly to the products being designed.

Candidates performed well when:

- they developed their own individual style and route through the design process;
- they had the confidence and encouragement to move away from designing a Prom dress for themselves;
- they explained their thinking at all stages;
- ideas were annotated and evaluated with more than basic descriptive notes;
- a range of fabrics were considered and experimentation with modern material combinations, methods of production and construction took place;

- a range of challenging decorative techniques were explored including manipulation techniques and were relevant to the design specification rather than a random collection of test pieces;
- candidates drafted their own paper patterns or modified commercial ones;
- commercial patterns were used wisely with adaptation, testing and modification taking place and a full explanation of the work carried out given;
- toile's were made as part of the development of original products and not just to test out the final choice of commercial pattern;
- discussed and shared their ideas with the client or third party;
- industrial aspects and wider issues such as sustainability were integrated throughout folder and influenced the designing

Criterion 3. Making / Modelling

Once again this was a well met criterion with some very exciting made outcomes using modern equipment and techniques. There was a significant increase in the use of sublimation printers and laser cutters to help produce the final outcomes. In the past these techniques were only used for sampling. Few failed to recognise that challenging, complex products with a high level of demand are expected to be made at this level. Photo diaries of making were very popular and on the whole were very well executed, incorporating quality checks and evaluative comments into the narrative.

Candidates performed well when:

- products made had the level of complexity and challenge expected at this level;
- a range of appropriate, high level making skills were employed;
- fabric pieces were joined accurately using the correct techniques;
- products were neatly finished with excess fabric trimmed and seams finished appropriately;
- correct techniques were used and were suitable for the fabrics chosen and the end product use;
- a varied range of modern materials and components were chosen and used effectively;
- confidence and an ability to adapt the original ideas was shown;

Criterion 4. Evaluation and Testing

Candidates appear to have improved the planning and timing of their projects making sure to include aspects of testing and evaluating throughout. Final evaluations sometimes continue to be descriptions of the work carried out and not product analysis of their made outcomes. Most candidates provided excellent photographs of the final products in use.

Candidates performed well when:

- detailed and comprehensive testing strategy applied throughout the project with results used to inform the designing and refine any modifications;
- all aspects of the final prototype or product were tested and evaluated against the specification;
- comments of others used appropriately to develop the prototype or product to improve the effectiveness of the final outcome;
- formative evaluations were recordings of decisions made and ran throughout the folder work giving reasons for the choices they have made along the way;
- user trials were performed;
- products were compared with successful textile products currently available in the shops;
- public opinion on the final product was surveyed and suggestions for modifications taken on board;

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- fabrics are tested for a reason to establish qualities that have not been highlighted in the specification;

Criterion 5. Communication and Presentation

Candidates do well at meeting this criterion not just because they present their work originally, with flair but also because they choose appropriate methods to communicate their thinking. Very few candidates over decorated design work and the majority of folders were a pleasure to moderate.

Candidates performed well when:

- they presented the best of their work in a focussed and concise way;
- they used the correct technical language;
- they used modern technology to aid communication and save time.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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