

FASHION AND FABRICS

Paper 6050/01

Written

Key Messages

In **Section A** candidates showed strength in their understanding of questions relating to dressmaking techniques. Candidates should try to improve their knowledge of the properties and characteristics of fabrics.

The design **Question (7)** in **Section B** carries the same marks as other questions and should not be chosen unless candidates are confident in their knowledge of embroidery techniques.

General Comments

Scripts were well presented and in all cases handwriting was legible and many candidates produced good, clear labelled diagrams where needed, to illustrate their answers. The majority of candidates numbered their answers clearly, leaving a gap between answers, with many using a new page for each answer, which was helpful to the Examiner.

All candidates attempted **Section A** and produced a wide range of responses. Almost all candidates answered **Section A** in the answer book this year.

The majority of candidates answered three questions in **Section B** with a small number attempting only two questions. A few weaker candidates answered all the questions in **Section B**. **Questions 2, 4, 6 and 7** were all popular questions. Responses to **Question 7** were generally disappointing; candidates need to develop their design idea and show how it could be worked to gain full marks. **Question 5** was the least popular question and generally answers to this question were weak. Candidates should be encouraged to read all questions carefully before they begin to answer. Some candidates gave information that was correct, but did not answer the actual question, which resulted in marks being lost. This was especially the case with **Question 6(d)** where many candidates achieved no marks because they described the criteria for choosing a sewing machine instead of the safety points asked for in the question. Candidates should be reminded that the number of marks for each question is clearly indicated in brackets () at the end of each question or part question and that this should give some indication of the amount of information that is required to gain full marks.

This year all candidates wrote question numbers clearly in the margin which was very helpful to Examiners. It would be helpful if candidates could also be asked to fill in the front of the question book with the numbers of the questions attempted in **Section B**. They should also be reminded to leave a few lines between the end of one question and the beginning of the next. This may also help candidates to avoid missing out a section from some questions.

Comments on Specific Questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Few candidates gained more than half marks for this question, with many candidates giving three-quarter or long sleeve instead of short sleeve. Candidates can improve their marks by ensuring that they give two word answers.

- (b) (i) Responses were generally more confident and correct for (ii), cotton/polyester seersucker. Many candidates lost marks for this question because they did not appear to read the question carefully. As in previous years structure and appearance were not well known, with a substantial number of candidates giving the name of another fibre for structure. Feel/handle and weight were generally known for both fabrics with most candidates offering just one answer for weight this year. Fastenings and finishes in the last part of the question were generally known but were not always appropriate for the named fabric.
- (ii) as above.
- (iii) The majority of candidates gave answers which were for the general properties of cotton fibre and did not relate their answers to the shorts in View C or the named fabric.
- (iv) Candidates offered a variety of seam finishes which were generally appropriate for cotton pique. Reasons for choices were not always clearly explained.
- (v) The majority of candidates answered correctly that the presser foot should be changed to a zipper foot but few were able to suggest another adjustment to the sewing machine. A proportion of candidates suggested changes to stitch length or thread which were incorrect.
- (vi) This question was generally well answered but some candidates drew the symbols and did not describe their meanings. A minority gave temperatures for washing and ironing which were incorrect for the named fabric, cotton/polyester seersucker.
- (c) (i) Well answered.
- (ii) Generally well answered with most candidates naming at least four pattern pieces correctly.
- (iii) Few candidates answered this question correctly.
- (iv) This question was answered well with most candidates showing a good understanding of appropriate pattern markings.
- (d) Almost all candidates were able to identify the correct answers for interfacing, buttons and thread. A significant number of candidates confused the amount and width of fabric required to make the jacket.
- (e) Answers to the first four sections of this question were generally correct. Answers to the last two sections were often confused. It would help candidates to identify incorrect answers if they read the completed sentences to themselves to check that their answers are correct.
- (f) This question was answered well with most candidates giving money-saving, good fit and originality as reasons for making their own clothes.

Section B

Question 2

This was a popular question with many candidates demonstrating a good knowledge of cotton fibres.

- (a) Most candidates named the cotton plant as the origin of cotton fibres. To gain 2 marks candidates should have explained that cotton fibres are obtained from the dried seed pod from the cotton plant. A very small number of candidates gave the name of a country as the answer.
- (b) Few candidates were able to name more than 3 or 4 properties of cotton fibres. The most common answers referred to strength, durability and absorbency.
- (c) (i), (ii) Most candidates were able to give enough information about the two fabric finishes to get 2 marks for each section of the question. More candidates understood about mercerization with many candidates confusing a brushed finish with the process in which fibres are combed in order to remove dirt.
- (d) Generally well answered.

Question 3

This was not a popular question and those candidates who answered it rarely included enough detail to achieve high marks. Although diagrams were widely used, the accompanying explanations were often unclear.

- (a) Answers to this question lacked detail. Most candidates understood that an arrow was used on the pattern to indicate the direction of the fold but did not include accurate information about other markings.
- (b) Some candidates drew good clear diagrams to show how the pleat is pinned and tacked. Explanations of how this was done were weak. A small number of candidates simply repeated the question which did not achieve any marks. Few candidates explained that diagonal tacking would be used to hold the pleat in place.
- (c) A number of candidates appeared confused by this question and focused on top stitching the edge of the pleats. A mark was given if this was explained well. A small number of candidates explained how an inverted kick pleat was secured and this answer was correct.
- (d) Few candidates achieved more than 1 mark for this question.

Question 4

This was a popular question. Some parts were answered well but few candidates were able to achieve full marks in all sections. Most candidates did not attempt a comparison but simply explained the methods for each process. In some parts candidates gave reasons for using the processes instead of describing the methods used.

- (a) This question was generally well answered. Very few candidates suggested carrying out the process directly on the fabric instead of on the paper pattern.
- (b) Few candidates achieved full marks for this section. Information about trimming corners was generally confined to a diagram showing how to cut a triangle shaped corner off a right angle with no further detail. More detail was generally included for layering seams.
- (c) Most candidates understood the difference between a clip and a notch but did not always understand which type of curve each should be used on. Few candidates added further detail about how to complete the processes. A minority of candidates answered incorrectly with information about notches found on paper patterns.

Question 5

This was the least popular question and few candidates who answered it appeared to understand what a reversed collar is.

- (a) This question was very poorly answered and only a small number of candidates could describe a reversed collar.
- (b)(i) This was generally well answered though some candidates did not appear to have read the question carefully as they referred to interfacing generally in their answers instead of specifically iron interfacing.
- (ii) Few candidates gained full marks for this question because their answers did not relate to a reversed collar. Credit was given where possible to an understanding of the general techniques used in tacking a collar to a garment.
- (iii) This was poorly answered, mainly because candidates were referring to other simpler collars in their answers so did not describe the difficulties associated with machining a reversed collar.
- (iv) This part of the question was not answered well because candidates generally were not considering a reversed collar in their answers.

Question 6

This was one of the most popular questions and candidates appeared confident in their answers.

- (a) Almost all candidates answered this question well. Paper scissors are not used in garment making.
- (b) While most candidates answered this question well with good reasons given, some of the responses were disorganised and repetitious. Some candidates tried to give a feature for each cutting tool given in (a) instead of considering cutting tools generally.
- (c) There were some good responses to this question. Candidates who did not read the question carefully lost marks by giving general instructions for using a steam iron instead of how to keep it in good condition.
- (d) Few candidates gained more than 2 marks for this question and these were generally for being aware of the need to keep fingers away from the needle when machining. A large proportion of candidates gave answers which were about what to consider when buying a sewing machine rather than safety points when using a machine.

Question 7

Answers to this question generally lacked sufficient detail to gain full marks and often indicated that the candidate had not read the question carefully enough.

- (a) Most designs were appropriate. Candidates need to offer more original and detailed designs to gain full marks. Many candidates did not show how their designs could be used as a repeat pattern on the blouse or suggest colours for the design.
- (b) This was generally poorly answered. The majority of candidates simply listed 3 stitches but did not show how they could be used in the design. Some candidates caused problems for themselves because they had only drawn a simple flower shape for their design in part (a).
- (c) Answers to this question were poor. Candidates generally did not show that they understood the criteria for choosing embroidery threads.
- (d) Answers to this section were generally good.
- (e) This was generally answered well with the most popular choice of fabric being cotton denim. A very small number of candidates suggested inappropriate fabrics such as silk organza.

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Paper 6050/02

Practical

General comments

The 2012 practical test was in line with those of previous years. The test was within the standard expected of candidates at this level. The processes involved were quite straightforward and ones which the candidates should be able to achieve in the making of a simple garment. Most candidates were able to complete the right half of a pair of shorts but there were one or two who did not get very far.

Comments on specific questions

The candidates were required to cut out and make up the right half of a pair of shorts; this included inserting a front pocket, working a dart in the back, making and attaching a waistband and turning up the hem. It was a straightforward test using processes which were familiar to the candidate. The majority understood the pattern and the instructions. Again this year candidates tended to lose marks for inaccuracy. Many did not follow the instructions carefully when making and putting in the pocket and making and attaching the waistband. Candidates need to follow the examination instructions carefully and to use the 1.5 cm seam allowance accurately. Candidates that do more than is instructed do not gain extra marks.

Choice of fabric and interfacing

Generally the fabric and colour were satisfactory. The iron-on interfacing was of the correct weight for the fabric.

Cutting out

Marks were awarded for placing the pattern on the fabric accurately and for using the scissors carefully. The candidates showed that they had followed the instructions and layout diagram by placing the pattern pieces on the straight grain of the fabric. However, several lost marks for badly cut edges round the curves at the centre front and centre back of the shorts. There were a few tests where the candidates did not follow the instructions and diagram for cutting out the interfacing for the waistband - they had folded the waistband pattern in half lengthwise and cut out only half the waistband width. One or two had cut out the pattern for the longer shorts (they must have been allocated more than the required amount of fabric) The majority made up the right hand side of the shorts, one or two did the left hand side and there were a few muddled tests.

The pocket

Most pockets were quite accurately placed – from the side seam across the front and down the side seam and were generally flat. The pocket seam was not always well trimmed and the edge worked out but the top stitching was generally good. On the wrong side there were some very good curved pockets, quite well trimmed and neatened. Several candidates made up the pocket with the seam on the inside and lost marks!

The dart

This was a simple process generally well done and the majority pressed it towards the back of the shorts.

Side seam

Generally successful candidates either worked a good neat open seam or pressed the turnings towards the back trimmed and neatened them by overlocking or zig-zagging them. There were a good number of the poorer tests where the incorrect seam allowance was used and the seams were not neatened. All French seams should be pressed towards the back of the shorts.

Inner leg seam

On the majority of tests the edges were together at the crotch and a 1.5 cm seam allowance was used. However, the seam was not always neatened. Several did not accomplish this process.

Waistband

Many candidates did not work the front waistband seam – they therefore lost marks for workmanship and correct length. Waistbands were not always of even width all the way along. Those candidates who had half the width of interfacing lost marks for it not being flat throughout.

Attaching the waistband

Candidates did not always follow the instructions step by step and turn the correct shorts front opening allowance to the wrong side or the centre back seam allowance to the wrong side before attaching the waistband. The tacking along the centre front fold was better this year. The C.F. waistband seam was not always in line with the C.F. fold line of the front shorts. The line of stitching on the right side was fairly well done – not many tucks or gathers. In the poorer cases the waistband seam was not often well trimmed and seldom did candidates trim the last turning of the waistband, but generally the hemming was good (a few candidates machine stitched the wrong side of the band so did not get marks).

The hem

Not all candidates accomplished the hem. It was generally quite well done, not always of the correct even width. The side seam and inner leg seams often matched up on the wrong side. The machine stitching was not always even along the edge of the turning – probably there was a rush to get it finished!

Presentation

The presentation of the shorts was good, generally well pressed, clean and labels sewn on by hand (labels machine stitched on lose marks). One or two candidates lost marks for writing on the right side of the fabric and in some cases for leaving long ends of machine stitching, tackings or tailor tacks. One or two tests could have had the shorts pressed better - time should always be allowed for this. One or two centres put the patterns in the envelopes – these are for the centres to keep.

FASHION AND FABRICS

Paper 6050/03

Coursework

Key Messages

- A variety of processes were worked on the garments but these were not always correctly worked out.
- Some coursework consisted of a folder, a skirt or a blouse and a child's garment which had only three processes instead of the minimum of five required per garment to meet the coursework requirement.
- Teachers should advise candidates on the choice of styles and fabrics and also encourage them to practice the different processes before working these on their garments.
- Many incomplete garments were submitted this year and it should be reminded that the coursework is produced over a two-year period. In some cases, only a few unassembled pieces of one garment were submitted instead of a folder and two garments.

General Comments

The coursework submitted this year ranged from excellent to very poor with some good or average standards.

Folder

Most folders included the required information on one garment fitting the candidates. A few still had the folder worked on a child's garment. The description or illustration of the garment showing the back and front views should be given and the individual style features labelled using at least two words. Reasons for choice of style, pattern, fabric and colour should be stated. Name of candidate, teacher or school should not be included in the folder.

Good folders had the list of requirements for garment construction with the correct width, fibre content or weight of the fabric; the quality and quantity of sewing and tacking threads; the fastening(s) used, and the interfacing (if used). At times, the sewing notions in the folder did not match those used on the garment. Costing per notion and total cost were well done by a few candidates.

The plan of work seemed to be the weakest part of the folder for many candidates. The order of work and details about how to work the various processes were given instead of stating a few processes with which the candidate have had some difficulties and steps taken to overcome these by showing samples tried out before working on the garment. Reasons for choosing a particular process instead of another should also be given. Candidates should avoid using correction fluids, printing on dark coloured sheets and have their folders vetted for grammatical errors as these spoil the presentation of their work.

Presentation

Fabrics chosen were suitable for the garment styles in most cases but sheer and stretch fabrics should be discouraged at SC level as candidates do not master working on these. Choice of sewing notions such as size of press-studs, hooks and eyes and length of zip matched the garment style and weight of the fabric in most garments. Candidates should avoid using the tailor's hooks and metal bars on their garments as these are too bulky on light and medium weight fabrics. The sewing thread, buttons and zipper should match the

fabric unless used for decorative purposes. Threads used to neaten seam allowances with overlock stitches should match the garment in colour.

Most candidates hand stitched the labels correctly to single fabric but all candidates from a few Centres stitched the labels after folding the garments thus sewing over the processes and these had to be removed to facilitate marking. Some garments had been over handled and/or were soiled during ironing. Most garments were pressed and well-folded prior to submission. Candidates should aerate their garments before packing and submitting.

Garments

Only the cut and assembly of the different pieces and lines of machining were well done on many garments and the various processes were wrongly worked out on both garments in too many cases. Plain edge-stitched seams had only a good line of machining but the seam allowances were of uneven width, edge stitching of poor quality and trimming not done or wrongly done. Seams were quite well pressed on the whole.

Although some corresponding darts were of uneven lengths with up to 1 cm difference, on the whole the working of darts were quite scoring. The darts tapered to a point and were correctly finished by darning the ends of machine threads into the machine stitches.

The most common fastening was the Zip fastener used on skirts, trousers and shorts. The concealed method was not always well worked out. Correctly attached zip include good lines of machining, length of zip matching with opening, zip tape ends trimmed and secured to seam allowance with loop stitches.

Hooks and eyes, press studs and buttons attaching ranged from poor to very good. Some candidates showed good workmanship in making the worked bar by hand. Buttons were seldom well attached or buttonholes worked out either by hand or machine. Machine-made buttonholes did not have the corners reinforced. Waistband on skirts should be fastened with either hooks and worked bars (on double layers of fabric) or eyes and a press-stud **or** a button and buttonhole.

Well worked hems were secured with hemming or slip-hemming stitches with appropriate stitches across underarms and side seams with good alignments. The type of hemming worked depends on the style, weight and fibre content of the fabric as well as the shape and width of the hem which should not be too wide or too narrow. Too often, the lay was over-trimmed (which caused fraying), unevenly trimmed or not trimmed at all.

Waistbands should be of a good shape with proper weight of interfacing, seams well-trimmed and pressed, corners well worked out and turning secured to the machine stitches on the WS. Many candidates had poor shape and width of waistband caused by poor or no tacking before securing to line of machining. Corners were often bulky and poorly shaped due to uneven trimming.

Neckline, armholes and waistline were neaten with a shaped on many garments. But these were of uneven width, had the seam allowances unevenly trimmed and not snipped along curves resulting in poor shapes and bulky fitting lines. The facing should be secured on darts and seam allowances on the WS to produce flatness. Under-stitching also helps to maintain the rolled edges and shapes along these fitting lines.

Collars were not properly attached on many blouses. Some were attached upside down affecting flatness and a smooth line at neckline. Collar ends and revers were too often of uneven width.

Set-in sleeves with hand-stitched hem were quite common. The armhole seam ranged from very narrow to very large. Neatening this seam with zigzag stitches is possible when candidates master this process well.

Patch pockets were attached to many blouses and hip pockets were worked on skirts, shorts and trousers. The hip pocket openings were not always of the same length on the side seams. Rolled edges were beautifully worked on few garments. Some topstitching lines were of even distance from the edge. For topstitching, the machine stitches can be lengthened or the upper thread doubled to produce a decorative finish. Patch pockets were quite neatly attached on the whole but some candidates forgot to neaten the turnings before stitching the pocket to the garment with a single line of machining.

To meet the syllabus requirement, the coursework of good standard should include a folder and two garments with at least five processes on each. Some garments showed good workmanship on all processes and showed evidence of pressing during construction.

FASHION AND FABRICS

Paper 6050/04

Coursework

Key Messages

- It is not necessary to include samples of processes worked as part of the coursework.
- The use of decorative techniques and stitches in appropriate places can result in higher marks.
- On the whole candidates responded with interest and enthusiasm to coursework.

General Comments

The work submitted this year was similar in standard to previous years. The overall standard of coursework was good. A wide variety of fabrics and processes were shown and were mostly finished to a good standard. It is pleasing that most candidates were able to complete two garments and very few unfinished garments were seen. The types of garment chosen ranged from shorts, skirts, dresses, tops and trousers to a range of children's clothing. Higher marks could be awarded to candidates who submitted more technical garments which allowed the candidate to demonstrate a really high standard of workmanship on a variety of processes, for example, jackets. There was a limited range of decorative work evidenced and this is an area which could be developed further by some candidates. Most Centres are to be commended on the amount of work produced in the candidate's folders, which has been mostly realistic in terms of the amount. It is recommended that the syllabus is followed carefully, as it has specific details of the amount and standard of work expected both in folders and on individual garments.

In the majority of cases the work was well packaged and labelled carefully. It is particularly helpful if the work from each candidate is securely fastened and not loose sheets. Centres are asked to avoid the use of pins and presentation techniques that make it difficult for the Moderator to inspect the work. This facilitates a more effective completion of the moderation process.

In most cases the summary mark sheets were appropriately completed and marks recorded as whole marks. Half marks should not be entered on the summary mark sheets.

On the whole, Centres have interpreted the marking criteria well for the three sections. However, it has been necessary, in some instances in this examination year, to make adjustments to bring candidates' marks in line with the agreed international standard. Where any adjustments have been made, this is as a result of misinterpretation of the marking criteria or a lack of evidence to justify the marks awarded in the coursework.

Comments on Specific Sections

Folders

The standard of work found in folders was good and they were usually well-presented. Many candidates had effectively word processed the text and had included one or two photographs of the finished garments.

Candidates that did well produced a detailed illustration of the garment which showed construction details and processes required.

In the best Centres, detailed evidence was given of the planning required before making the garment. This should include both a detailed order of work and planning of techniques to be used. It is not a requirement to include samples of processes in this section, e.g. hems, darts, seams. Marks may be compromised if candidates do not provide sufficient evidence of planning in advance of the making process.

A few Centres had submitted heavy A3 folders. It is recommended that folders have soft covers and A4 size is appropriate.

Garments

To allow candidates to demonstrate a wide variety of skills it is recommended that the two garments made from fabrics which have different weights and handling properties. Fabrics such as cotton, polyester gabardine, cotton denim, cotton gingham and printed cotton cambric are suitable and easy to handle. Candidates who have a higher level of ability may be recommended to use fabrics with more difficult handling properties, e.g. polyester satin and silk. In general, candidates made a suitable choice of fabric and notions for the style of garment. Marks were compromised when garments were over handled and marked.

The majority of garments showed evidence of careful pressing during construction and of the final garment. Some of the garments showed excellent hand-sewing, with neat finishes shown on zips and buttonholes. Sleeves, collars and cuffs were well positioned by the majority of candidates.

It is important that high achieving candidates are given the opportunity to demonstrate good decorative techniques such as hand embroidery stitches, machine embroidery, ribbons or the addition of a lace trim. Very good examples of piping along seam edges and pockets were seen. Seams were generally even with some very skilful neatening evidenced. Higher attaining candidates should be guided towards making garments requiring a wide variety of processes, e.g. jackets.

Marks were compromised when garments were unfinished, presented with tacking left in, uneven and tight seams, loose, broken and uneven stitching. In a minority of cases collar points were challenging and not quite even.

It is clear that candidates have worked hard and enjoyed their Fashion and Fabrics course.