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# Fashion and Textiles

7561/W

Report on the Examination

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## Introduction

This was the first assessment of the new specification, focusing on knowledge and understanding of technical, and design and making principles. Students were also required to demonstrate their application and knowledge of maths and science in the context of design and technology.

Overall, several questions on this paper were answered well, but many responses sat in the lower mark bands. Many answers lacked detail in direct relation to the context of some questions. Introductions were included unnecessarily, often with no information that is creditworthy, especially for extended responses. Given the available space in the answer booklet, students would benefit from answering the questions directly and getting straight to the point. Careful reading of the questions and planning of answers would help students structure their responses in a more successful way.

## General comments

### Section A

**Question 1:** This question was very well answered, nearly all students correctly identified option D, treating cotton fabric to make it flame retardant, as a chemical finish.

**Question 2:** Most students showed some awareness of a correct workshop test to measure fabric shrinkage. Very few students were able to reach the top mark band; many were able to explain the main steps involved in a workshop testing method, but a lack of information with regard to fabric preparation, drying of fabric and reference to interpreting the results, saw nearly 70% of students achieving no more than 3 marks. Some responses suggested soaking fabrics in water, which would not replicate the agitation, or reach the temperatures required in fabric testing.

**Question 3:** This question required students to demonstrate their understanding of the different methods of producing non-woven fabrics, along with examples to support reasons for use. Most students understood that non-wovens are made directly from fibres, and were able to give a basic account of producing one or more different types of non-wovens, typically bonding and wool felt to include some examples. However, the mean mark for this question was 3 of an available 9 marks. Many students were confused in their understanding of the actual manufacturing processes; clarity of the different methods of producing non-wovens was essential in answering this question, many responses incorrectly suggesting knitted fabrics, as they are not 'woven'.

**Question 4:** There was a mixed response to this question, with very few students correctly placing all five woven structures in the correct row on the table. 40% of students correctly identified denim as a twill weave and calico as a plain weave, for 2 marks. Confusion with the woven structure of gabardine fabric saw mostly incorrect responses. Velvet and Terry towelling structures generated a varied response, only a few students correctly identifying the three-yarn system for both fabrics. Some examples included pile weave, three spun weave and napped weave; these are not correct, students should be able to identify and recall basic fabric structures.

**Question 5.1:** Nearly 25% of responses were not awarded any credit for this question, generally for suggesting an incorrect system for a seasonal high street top, most often citing mass production. 70% of all answers achieved 1-3 marks, with students correctly identifying batch production, giving some information about JIT and its benefits. However it is clear that students did not understand how batch production actually works, and how the workforce can adapt to meet the changing demands in fashion.

**Question 5.2:** A very small number of students achieved full marks for this question. Nearly half of all answers achieved 1 mark, which is surprising for a fairly straightforward question about the advantages of standardised components. Where students failed to achieve marks, it was usually because of a lack of detail and generalised comments such as, it is 'simple, fast, and easy'.

**Question 5.3:** Part one of the question was easily achieved by nearly all students, correctly calculating 9% of 2600 fashion tops to attain 1 mark. Part two of the question was not understood that well; students failed to recognise the answer required a calculation of a new, improved batch of products, and presented incorrect calculations. Nearly 10% of all answers however, achieved full marks.

**Question 6:** This extended question about care and disposal, was designed to test understanding of a range of issues with regard to fashion and textile products. 93% of all responses sat in the 1- 6 mark bands, with an average of 3 of the 12 marks available. Many students were able to demonstrate knowledge of biodegradability of natural and synthetic fibres and the effect finishes have on landfill and pollution, but few responses went beyond this general point. Better responses discussed types of fabric e.g. non-wovens breaking down in landfill much quicker than wovens, and different ways of recycling textile products. But overall, this question was mis-interpreted, and many students gave information about the general care of different fibres and fabrics such as, satin weaves snag, so care needs to be taken; wool shrinks, so needs to be dried flat. There were many references to sustainability and environmental issues regarding fibre sourcing, which were not relevant to the question and were not given credit.

## Section B

**Question 7:** Over 60% of responses achieved between 3 and 6 marks for this question. Students showed good awareness of how music and film can influence fashion, with some clear explanations. Popular music examples included Hip Hop, Punk, Rock and Roll, while Breakfast at Tiffany's was often cited for film. Marks were mostly lost because answers focused on one aspect at the expense of the other, i.e. music was generally well explained, but little, or often no explanation, was made with the influence film has had on fashion since 1900. The question does ask for the influence of both these aspects, careful reading of the question was essential.

**Question 8:** Surprisingly no students achieved full marks for this question. To reach the top mark band, detailed analysis and evaluation of Dior's New Look was required, 15% of students did achieve 5 marks, but the average was 2 marks. These basic answers included descriptions of the New Look silhouette, but lacked detail about the features, body shaping undergarments and very little reasons for the mixed reaction.

**Question 9:** This question was not answered well, with many students not recognising the link with application of knowledge from the non-examined component in adapting a basic bodice block. 88% of students were awarded 0 marks for this question. Answers were expected to include opening up a waist dart, and moving the excess into the bust dart, to create a new pattern template with more fullness along the hemline. Students incorrectly suggested adding pleats, flounces or frills at the hemline to add fullness; or creating a corset type top so the waist would appear to look fuller. Disappointingly, many students were not able to describe or give diagrams of a basic bodice block.

**Question 10:** Nearly 40% of answers suggested that third party feedback provided 'opinions for improvement'; this type of response was awarded 1 mark only. Some students were able to give good evaluations of feedback on product development, but overall a shortage of detailed points and insight into how feedback is used by a designer was lacking. Different types of data e.g. interviews, customer panels and online reviews, were correctly identified in many answers.

**Question 11:** A very well answered maths question, with 93% of students achieving 2 or 3 marks. Nearly all students were able to correctly give the total number of votes at 150, and the correct percentage of the vote for each style of school bag. A few students made inaccurate calculations for the pie chart angles.

**Question 12:** It was pleasing to see that 23% of responses achieved 5 or 6 marks for this maths question. However, 38% of all answers were not awarded any credit. This question was a good differentiator; the average response was credited with 2 marks. On the whole, students were able to calculate the surface area of the cone shape, but ran into difficulty when calculating the area of the hat brim – many not allowing for two rings of felt to make the brim.

### **Use of statistics**

Statistics used in this report may be taken from incomplete processing data. However, this data still gives a true account on how students have performed for each question.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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