

Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In D&T: Textiles (5TT02/01)

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Introduction and general comments

This is the last year of a now familiar paper format. The layout of the paper seems to be one with which the candidates and teachers are now accustomed. The multiple choice section at the beginning is very popular with very few boxes left blank. The middle section, containing the more traditional design section has been approached in a much more systematic and selective manner by most candidates, with a reduction in wordy notes. There has also been an improvement in more focused annotation, often involving the specification numbers to connect these together.

Towards the end of the paper are extended questions that would also test candidates 'quality of written communication', as well as their knowledge and understanding. These, again, have been approached in a more sequential way. This suggests that centres have read and passed on the examiner's information, and are sharing good practice with candidates. This is to be applauded.

The paper's range of short and longer answer type questions for example, through naming, discussion, description, justifications or explanations, helped candidates to demonstrate their abilities across a range of issues. This enabled candidates to progress to deeper analyses when called for, which in turn allows for access to the highest levels of marks.

Paper Summary

Q11(a)(i)

Increasingly popular introductory questions where some knowledge of common tools and equipment was expected. This allowed candidates to demonstrate their span of knowledge and understanding of these workroom items. The positive results from this section showed that good practice is being carried out in many centres to acquaint candidates with these, in order to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to gain marks.

This question based on the pin cushion was well answered by a substantial number of the cohort. Responses included the ability to insert the pins for a variety of reasons, including safety. Very few incorrect responses were seen. To 'store', 'hold' and make 'pins accessible' were also popular responses.

Q11(b)(i)

This question required candidates to be able consider a reason for the bead being located in that position of the product. Many lower ability candidates spent their time explaining how attractive the bead was, not gauging the need to explain the suitability the positioning would give, as for example a 'grip'.

Some Candidates could clearly link the drawstring and understand the function of the beads attached to it. The ability to relate the benefit that the two combined would give the hood was crucial.

Q11(c)

The most common responses seen were that of 'beads and buttons' being a 'choking' hazard and that of the 'drawstring' providing a danger through 'strangulation'. This again proved to be well justified in relation to the risk they posed to the wearer.

Sadly, whereas some candidates were able to link the hazards clearly, others stopped at naming the fastening, or used terms such as 'swallowed' or 'eaten' which did not clarify the dangerous outcome. A few mis-matched the risks and hazards. 1 mark only was seen in these circumstances.

Q11(d)

This question was about the attributes of ribbing and candidates seemed to be quite knowledgeable about some aspects and generally scored at least 1 mark.

The most common of those was ribbing's ability to 'stretch', 'expand' or being 'elastic'.

Explanations by candidates could often include: the ability to allow expansion, so it was easier to take off and put on; fit body parts, and provide a close fit or insulation, gaining the full 2 marks.

Q11(e)

Linked to the understanding of the suitability of a given fabric, this question highlighted the inability of candidates to name and justify the use of certain fabrics.

It seemed a difficulty for many candidates to separate their knowledge of fibres and fabrics. The most common response was that of the fibre 'wool' being named. However, many were able to give the correct property that linked to the question's need for an insulating fabric.

Where candidates demonstrated knowledge of fabrics, the most commonly occurring were of 'fleece' and 'brushed cotton'.

Q11(f)

This question referred to the requirement of candidates to be able to give clear instructions and information to enable a piece of felt to be made. Many were able to gain method marks, but did not seem able to add an equipment list, or provide relevant quality checks. Those sitting mainly in the 2-3mark range were able to practically explain the need for heat, moisture & friction, or applying webs in order to use the needle punching method to entangle the fibres. This question was generally not well answered as many candidates seemed to give a bonding or weaving method or attempted to include machinery.

In order to gain the full 4 marks candidates needed to make sure that they covered parts from a range of the process that could bring the outcome to completion, and not just a lot of detail about one in particular, for example layering the fibres in a web using a variety of colours.

The quality control explanations seen tended to be on the simplistic side, often giving instructions, advice or asking a question. Rather than giving a control check with a method/equipment to test it with, and what to do if the initial task attempted was unsuccessful. The quality checks required candidates to state 'how' they would perform them, not just give advice of what to look out for.

Q12

Once again, some good quality responses have been seen as candidates continue to take heed of the feedback given. Annotations are more readily linked to each criteria of the specification points being assessed, and this has improved their performance on this question.

The more capable candidates frequently used numbers or words taken directly from specification points, with credible validations of how they met each of these points added to them. Marks were commonly lost when candidates either missed out linking their comments to a specification point, for example; 'PVC' but not saying that it was provided as it made the product waterproof or simply repeated the question paper without further addition.

Candidates who presented numbers which effectively aimed to take the place of the specification point and reduced the need for additional writing were much more effective at focussing in on what that specification's requirement was.

Candidates tended to not add relevant technical language for hardwearing construction methods, having an appropriate wet weather fabric or finish or smart/ modern material. The logo was often well presented with different decorative methods applied between the two design ideas. Being comfortable to carry and holding music sheets seemed to gain marks on a regular basis.

Q13(a)

This 2 mark question required candidates to give two benefits of interfacing. Many candidates either knew it was strong or durable which produced 1 mark. 2 marks were commonly given when both were mentioned or interfacing's capacity to stabilise fabric.

Q13(b)

This question was not just about giving the properties of the named fibres but about comparing their suitability in a given function. Candidates often failed to reveal why a property would cause that effect on the laces. Many tended to present a list of like to like properties, such as 'nylon is waterproof but wool is not' without mentioning the suitability for choice of the highlighted feature on the given product. This question achieved relatively few full mark responses.

Q13(d)

It was clear to see that candidates either understood this question or were very unclear about what they should be responding to. This did show that some were not aware of what wearable electronics was. Some candidates had a good working knowledge of the everyday forms, such as pedometers and GPS tracking and these were frequently seen in responses. Less common were the use of conductive threads. Where justification marks were given the candidates were able to explain 'how' or 'why' these were useful. Less successful candidates would just describe the function or mention smart fabrics such as microencapsulation. Many gained at least 2 of the 4 marks available.

Q13(e)

Very few, if any, blank spaces were seen on this question, which is to be commended. The ability to evaluate and compare between the criteria set was sometimes approached by way of a table, an approach that lacked sufficient engagement. This was not as successful an approach to a question which considers the candidates' quality of written communication as basic grammatical skills were not evident in most cases.

The level of identifying relevant features was high in this series, however, candidates sometimes lacked the ability to compare relative features against one another, and many did so in isolation instead. Those that viewed the products as a whole with linked fibre, fabric properties and

components suitability benefited, and were more successful over those candidates who wrote a list of attributes written without reference or regard to the other product.

Q14(a)(i)

This 1 mark analysis question required an understanding of the usage of a cut away pocket. There were many correct responses grasped such as, being 'easy to insert hands' or 'access to contents' being often seen. Those unable to gain a mark often gave the basic function of a pocket.

Q14(a)(ii)

Similarly to Q14(a)(i) this question looked at pockets, but focussed in on a specific feature. It was obvious to note when candidates had come across the technical language of a 'gusset' as they commented on the expansion and ability to create a larger space. Equally, that often led to the further enhancement of greater amounts or size of objects able to fit into the pocket because of it. Candidates who only referred to the pocket more commonly described its attributes rather than the effect the gusset had on the pocket.

Q14(b)

It was encouraging to see candidates using correct terminology in this question such as 'shrinkage' and 'dye bleeding'. The most common incorrect response given was that of cotton being itchy and uncomfortable.

The most noticeably popular from the correct responses about cotton's disadvantages was its characteristic to crease readily and the time and effort required to address this, or how presentable that would leave a product.

Q14(c)

The characteristics of denim were known by many candidates as 1 mark was regularly given. These were for properties such as, hardwearing and abrasion resistant. Unfortunately, expansion on the first point was not frequently given and relevant links were not commonly made, such as, hardwearing features of the fabric allowing for the various treatments, like biostoning. Twill weaves was also a popular response.

Q14(d)(i)

This question related to the suitability (or as with Q14(d)(ii) the unsuitability) of the choice of the features of the trousers for a working environment. Where many were able to name one of the features with a suitable justification gaining the full 2 marks, a few unfortunately repeated the wording from the question (formal) and used that instead of their own justification.

The most popular responses seen for suitable features were 'pressed crease' and 'straight fit' with their ability to look 'professional', 'presentable' and 'smart' as a valid justifications. The majority could state at least 1 appropriate fastening to gain 1 mark, however, 2 full marks were often given.

Q14(d)(ii)

The correct features of being 'baggy' and the 'dropped crotch' were often given as being too 'casual' and having a relaxed 'sporty' feel, which made them unsuitable for the environment stated.

Q14(e)

Candidates responses to this 6-mark question, which (as with Q13(d)) included the asterisked quality of written communication component, did not on the whole provide many marks in the high band (5-6 mark) category. Many of the candidates gaining lower marks failed to consider the issues linked with a wider range of uses of Kevlar past the most obvious of 'bulletproof vests'.

Very little else was seen by most, however there were a number of candidates in the mid band who could explain why the construction enabled the benefits of Kevlar being bulletproof, stab proof, abrasion and fire resistance. There was also some wider links with areas other than enforcement such as motor cycle racing.