

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/01

Theory

General comments

Performance was variable with a wide range of marks.

Question 1 (b) was not well answered. **Question 2 (a) (b) and (c)** were poorly answered due to a lack of detail provided by candidates. **Question 4** was the least popular question.

SECTION A

QUESTION 1

Plain woven fabric was usually well known and many candidates gained full marks. There were many good sketches and correct terminology was used.

- (a) (i) Woven jacquard – there were a few good answers although many answers lacked detail. There were a few well-drawn sketches although many candidates did not attempt any sketches. Candidates should be encouraged to provide sketches where doing so would help to explain or illustrate their answer.
- (ii) Woven pile e.g. terry towelling or corduroy were often given. There were some very good answers but others were weak, with only limited explanations and no diagrams. There were some very good sketches which included sectional diagrams (side view) showing uncut loops and cut loops.
- (b) There were variable answers, with low scoring ones giving only a list whereas high scoring answers (with many gaining full marks) gave a good assessment of performance characteristics.
- (c) The performance characteristics of knitted and woven pile fabrics were well known, with some well-discussed answers and full marks were awarded in a good number of scripts. Some candidates described fabric rather than performance characteristics. Low scoring answers presented a list only with no discussion.

QUESTION 2

- (a) This was generally not well answered, although there were a few high scores. Part (a) sources of fibres were not always well known and lacked detail. At AS Level it is expected that candidates would know the raw materials and basic chemicals used in the production of man-made/synthetic fibres.
- (b) Variable answers were given and some answers showed accuracy in the drawing of microscope views of fibres; burning tests were usually known but not all details were given.
- (c) This was not well answered. A few good answers where as follows: viscose striations along the length of fibres were related to good absorbency; the smooth surface of polyester fibres was related to a lustrous finish on fibres/fabrics; the melting of polyester fibres related to low temperature needed when ironing polyester fabrics.
- (d) There were a number of good answers with various reasons given for using elastane as part of a blend e.g. fit of garments – suitable for all body types/sizes; creases more likely to drop out if the fabric contains elastane, etc.

SECTION B

QUESTION 3

- (a) Definition of texture usually well answered.
- (b) Many very good examples were given and answers gained full marks where detail was given.
- (c) There were some excellent answers with many gaining full marks; many sketches showed interesting ideas, for example, a leaf design and how it could be used on a dress or a sea theme used on a wall panel. There was a wide variety of examples.
- (d) The colour wheel and groups of colours was well known and answers gave many examples of how colours could be used in fashion and a few examples of how colour could be used in the home.

QUESTION 4

This was the least popular question although it was well answered and candidates were able to give good detail for most of the sections.

- (a) Grading and lay planning were known.
- (b) Answers varied as to the importance of 'basic block' patterns in industry with most gaining some marks.
- (c) This was well answered with many examples given which included flares, lengthen/shortening, adding button bands or cuffs, changing the position of darts, etc.
- (d) The answers were usually good although a wide variety of edge finishes was not always given. Some answers included only seam edge finishes. Credit was given but answers could have included more points, especially garment edges such as hems and necklines. There were, however, some very good answers.



DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/02

Practical

General Comments

There were a variety of different styles and garments chosen for the practical exam. Centres need to agree with CIE which tasks are suitable for this level. Some Centres did not offer their candidates challenging enough tasks for AS Level.

The test pieces showed a wide range of ability, with some work of a very high standard. Candidates showed excellent knowledge of pattern drafting and adaptation, through to completing a full garment. Where the results were disappointing this was mainly due to a lack of planning by the candidate or a poor choice of task set for the examination by the Centre. Some Centres appear to have had resourcing difficulties when conducting the practical examination.

Comments on specific questions

Task Analysis and Planning

Question 1

- (a) Generally candidates understood the set tasks and made a complete skirt or top to a good standard.
- (b) Fabric choices were good with an interesting range of cottons, cashmere, polyester cottons and silk. There were plain, printed, woven and embroidered fabrics. Some candidates noted a different fibre content to the actual fabric used, for example, polyester/cotton was listed but cashmere was used. Cottons are easy to work with and are not very challenging for AS Level work. Where candidates worked with a more difficult fabric to handle, they were awarded marks.

Where the fabric choice was not suitable for the proposed garment such as being too lightweight for that type of garment, candidates lost marks.

- (c) Shopping lists were consistent and well thought out. The most successful were presented as a table with quantities and costs listed. The list of resources was usually included in the shopping lists. The only limitation seen in the resource lists was access to, and the use of, overlockers. Whether this is because of availability or because candidates choose not to use them is unclear.
- (d) Four reasons for choosing fabric colour led to repetitive answers such as 'a dark skirt can be matched to a light blouse.' Weaker responses mentioned personal data such as 'the colour suits me', which is not appropriate for the examination. Candidates should demonstrate that they understand the importance of colour and design when giving their reasons for making a particular choice.

Candidates should also show knowledge of fibres, fabric names, structure, qualities and characteristics. Fabric availability and suitability for climate was mentioned.

Components and notions were well described. However, some candidates omitted these completely from their answers.

Hooks and eyes are used to close the opening at the top of the zip and to stop the zipper from opening. They should not be seen. Many were too big for purpose.

Many candidates wrote that invisible zips are easy to stitch in. They are difficult to put in and few candidates achieved successful results.

Fusing or interfacing is used for shaping garments. Most candidates had no idea of this.

Sewing processes were not so well defined. Candidates should comment on their choice of seam, facing and hem finish. Some candidates chose to omit the processes altogether, but those who answered the question gave full and reasonable answers.

- (e) Most candidates made a thorough list of the resources needed.

Preparation

Question 2

- (a) The teacher's or supervisor's comments are important here to give a fair record of how the candidate used their time. Candidates should be timed to the exact length of the exam. Candidates arriving late should be noted.
- (b)(i) Paper patterns were cut very well. Centre Front and Centre Back should be clearly marked on the pattern pieces. The type of pattern adjustments varied and this was reflected in the candidates' results. The alteration required in the test should ask candidates to make stylistic changes which test their skills. Only altering a pattern size is not enough of a challenge and furthermore does not provide candidates with enough opportunity to demonstrate their pattern cutting skills.

Complex pattern alterations included:

- Inserting front and back inverted pleats into a drafted pattern
- Inserting gathers into the crown/head of a plain set in sleeve

Alterations which were not of the standard required at AS Level standard included:

- Lengthening and shortening pattern pieces
- Adjusting sizing

For the inverted pleats 'box pleat depth' could be interpreted to mean height or width and could be confused with the stitched depth of the inverted pleat. Most of the inverted pleats were too wide, utilizing a lot of fabric and creating bulk in the skirt. This was especially evident in the very small sizes.

The sleeve pattern adjustment was understood at different levels. Some candidates graded the pattern pieces and added a seam allowance.

Others divided the crown or underarm section but took the division right down to the hem and therefore created a narrower hem.

The ones who did make successful alterations were good. A number of different solutions were made and the most successful involved cutting the sleeve head across and then splitting triangular sections to enlarge the crown. This is the accepted correct method.

Most candidates cut up the neck facing pattern. The original shape should have been kept. An interfacing pattern could have been cut separately. The neckline facings were mostly too narrow.

- (ii) Planning the order of work should list:

- The stages in which the processes are completed and the garment assembled.
- The time required to complete the tasks.

The order of work should be written as a set of instructions to someone. Terms or words such as 'nicely pressed' and 'neat' are not very meaningful.

Many candidates did not submit a cutting layout. Candidates should have developed a cutting layout as part of their planning and then included a copy of it with their test pieces. Candidates



should be monitored at the cutting stage and notes made on their progress, to show an understanding of grain, fabric folding, pinning and cutting.

Selvages should not be cut and used as seam allowances. They are woven tighter than the rest of the cloth and do not give in the sewing process. This becomes visible where the woven selvedge utilizes a different colour yarn.

Some candidates used the wrong side of the fabric on the right side and this gave the appearance of the cross grain being used in the cutting out stage.

- (iii) Testing the fit was very successful and most candidates could adapt the pattern to their size.
- (iv) There were no samples of techniques sent in.

Implementation

Organisation and Time Management

Question 3

- (a) Candidates were very good at documenting their time management and sharing resources. Where organisation and time management was not documented candidates lost marks.

Tasks

Skirts with inverted pleats

- (b)1. Panel and pleat seam allowances were well finished but not lying in the same direction through the garment i.e. at waistband and hem.
- 2. Side seam allowances were too wide with each side measuring 2.5 cms.
- 3. The seam allowance was unnecessarily trimmed and not overlocked. The zipper openings were between 10cm to 15 cm (4" to 6") when at least an 18 cm (7") opening is standard, so as to easily put on and take off the skirt. An invisible zipper is stitched into the seam allowance before the seam is joined. This task was poorly executed.
- 4. Facings would lie better at the waistline if they were clean finished /under stitched (machined to the seam allowances by the seam line). Seam allowances need grading.
- 5. 'Herringbone' or 'invisible stitch was used to stitch facing hems onto skirt front and back, not giving a good finish. Facings could be hemmed or overstitched on the inside of the skirt, at the seam allowances and pleats but not on a single layer of fabric.

Hooks and eyes were stitched onto the zipper tape and should be stitched onto the facings. Many would not fasten. On the whole this was badly executed.

Tasks

Tops with adjusted sleeve crown

- (b)1. Darts were stitched to a very good standard.

Candidates tended to use too narrow an interfacing for the facing. Many candidates were not familiar with 'under stitching' and some confused this with 'topstitching'. This is a line of machining which is stitched, near to the seam line, through all layers of the facing and seam allowances to enable the facing to roll back to the inside and lie flat.

- 2. Side and back seams were predominately finished with a zig zag stitch. The stitching was often too loose and not small enough to overcast the edges. Edges were not trimmed or the stitching did not finish the edges. Where a straight stitch was used candidates achieved a better finish in the open/flat seams, as this is suited to lightweight cottons and linens. Where overlockers are available candidates should be encouraged to use them.

3. A concealed zip (lapped) should have only one line of machining showing. The machined edge nearest the teeth should be folded 3 mm away from the seam line, towards the seam allowance in order for this edge to be concealed. Some candidates used invisible zips.
4. Most candidates achieved good results in sleeve setting. Where the gathered crown/head was weak, this was due to either poor pattern cutting or poor dispersal of gathers at the crown.
5. Most candidates chose to machine the front hem, as is appropriate. Some chose to hand stitch the hem and showed an excellent display of hand stitching.

Many candidates showed excellent hand sewing skills. Where time is taken up by hand sewing at the expense of another process e.g. putting the zip in, candidates should manage their time accordingly so as not to lose marks.

Tasks

Tops with peplum flounces

The tasks should have been specified and printed on each candidate's sheet. They should be the same for each candidate.

Candidates had a good understanding of the processes used and analysed the processes well.

The neckline and front opening facing were well stitched but the seam allowances were poorly finished.

Candidates were not familiar with 'under stitching'. This is a line of machining which is stitched, near to the seam line, through all layers of the facing and seam allowances to enable the facing to roll back to the inside and lie flat.

Candidates forgot to pay attention to seam allowances lying in the same direction at each end. This was especially important where a design calls for many seams crossing each other. The princess seams were well executed.

Overlocking was used by all candidates but the quality of overlocking was generally poor, with missed stitches, stitching coming away from the edges and fabric from the main garment being caught in and cut.

One buttonhole and button were completed by all candidates. Most candidates attached a decorative trim which was generally set too near the Centre and concealed by the overlap on the front opening.

Sleeves were not set in accurately as the dispersal of fullness appeared at the armhole. No fullness should have been visible.

The peplums/flounces were attached successfully but were too short for the bodices with no overlap and there were gaps showing.

Tasks

Straight skirts

Where either overlockers or a zig zag stitch are not available, edges and seam allowances should be clean finished by turning under the edge and straight stitching.

Darts were generally too long and badly positioned. Two darts either side of the front or back are needed. Stitching at dart points should be either darned in or machine stitched in reverse.

Candidates were not familiar with 'under stitching'. This is a line of machining which is stitched, near to the seam line, through all layers of the facing and seam allowances to enable the facing to roll back to the inside and lie flat.

Evaluation

Candidates need to evaluate what they have done in the time given, comment on their findings and state how they could improve on their work if given another opportunity.

Evaluation is an important section and candidates need to be aware of what is required in their response:

- The strengths and weaknesses of their work; what problems did they face and how did they solve them?
- Which techniques did they find hard or easy?
- What were the positive and negative points of how they planned and carried out the task?
- What improvements should they make in terms of planning, preparation, organisation, time management, cutting and sewing?
- The accuracy/workmanship of their work: does the garment fit well, are the seams neat etc;
- What would they do differently if given the opportunity to complete the task again?

Candidates' conclusions showed an understanding of the processes and procedures they went through with good explanations of their findings and time management. Credit is given to candidates who recognise their mistakes and who made corrections, as this clearly shows the individual's potential to develop their learning.

Some candidates' conclusions and findings were far too personal in comment such as 'I was stressed'. The candidate should concentrate on commenting on technique etc. Many candidates wrote a log of what they did in the test but with little evaluation, so it was not possible to see whether they had identified any problem areas or what improvements they would make to their performance.

Generally candidates who produced the most successful practical results, also produced the most realistic and critical evaluation. Many candidates did not realise the mistakes they had made.

There were good comments on time management, with many candidates realising how important it was to plan their time.

Where there was very little output from the candidates and no real understanding of what was needed, candidates lost marks.

Health and Safety

The Principal Examiner handles each piece of work presented. Therefore, it is important that the rubric regarding pins and labels is followed.

Pins and needles should not be left in candidates' practical work.
Name labels should be stitched, and not pinned, on.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/03

Textiles Applications and Technology

General comments

This was the first sitting of the A level written paper, 9631/03, for Design and Textiles.

The paper was accessible to all candidates. However, **Question 1** was more demanding than the other questions, with responses to parts **(b)** and **(c)** sometimes lacking relevant detail. This did not however, affect the difficulty of the paper.

The candidates performed as expected and all questions were attempted. There was a wide range of answers. There were very few scripts where candidates had unfinished answers and almost all candidates followed the rubric instructions and answered the required number of questions.

Question 1

- (a)** This was usually well answered and full marks were often gained.
- (b)(i)** Answers varied with some giving only a list of fabric finishes, with no explanation. Answers which gained full marks needed to explain the fabrics finish, for example, how it is applied to the fabric. It is also relevant to include which fibre/fabric the finish is suitable for.
- (ii)** This section had better answers. Discussion included how the fabric behaves when the finish is used, how long the finish lasts (i.e. durability – and whether the finish is temporary or permanent). Some of the finishes were not always relevant to sportswear, so full credit could not always be given.
- (c)** There were a few very good answers with many well-described points. There were many answers however, which described points without explaining why they were important to the manufacturer. Answers could have included points such as: accuracy of garments due to following the specification; correct stitches used for the same standard of manufacture throughout; appropriate fabric used which is suitable for sportswear; suitable fastenings for sportswear; additional materials needed, etc.
- (d)** Variable answers were evident here. There were two areas which needed to be answered: stitches and joins. Stitches included lockstitch, straight stitch, overlocking, and zig-zag as used in embroidery (e.g. logos). Some answers discussed joins and stitches together and relevant points were included e.g. discussion about the use of double stitched seams, piped seams, overlocked seams (stitched and overlocked at the same time). Joins was not so well answered with most answers giving mainly different seam finishes.

Question 2

- (a)** There was usually a good comparison between hand and machine embroidery and full marks were often awarded.
- (b)** A wide range of examples was usually given here such as the use of textured yarns, plied yarns, metallic yarns, and high marks were often awarded.
- (c)** This section was less well answered and the term 'free stitching' was not always well described. Free stitching using the machine is a type of darning, where the feed dog (teeth) is lowered or covered. This allows free stitching on fabric when the fabric is placed in an embroidery hoop to keep it tight. The hoop can be moved in all directions so as to give a variation of stitching, not just vertical/straight lines.

- (d) Most answers included relevant information. However, answers which gained more marks had stated a particular culture/country and were able to give a more informed answer. Some answers had examples from several cultures. There were many very good well-informed and detailed answers which also included sketches and these answers were a pleasure to mark. The question did ask for more than one technique, so candidates need to make sure they read the question carefully so as to be able to gain maximum marks.

Question 3

- (a) Colour theory was usually well known and many candidates gained full marks here.
- (b) This was usually well answered with many very good labelled designs. The best answers were able to give back as well as front views and the colours chosen related back to the colour theory in (a). Justification was usually well done.
- (c) (i) Answers sometimes confused 'natural dyestuffs' with 'natural fibres' and few marks were awarded in some cases. This topic is stated in the syllabus as the 'sources and use of natural dyestuffs' and is a natural progression from discussion about colour. The answers could include discussion about using plant materials, wood chips and other natural products, to produce dyes. When mordants are added the colours can be changed and made faster when washing.
- (ii) Synthetic dyes are different from natural dyes and can be added to the spinning solution before extrusion.

Question 4

- (a) Usually well answered although there was a wide range of marks according to how much detail had been given.
- (b) The 'recycling' topic was also usually well answered with some detailed answers given on how items could be re-used.

Question 5

This was the least popular question in this section, but when attempted, was usually well answered.

- (a) This was a straightforward question and most answers were detailed and well explained.
- (b) This was well answered in the majority of cases and candidates were able to state many relevant points about fabrics for women's jackets.
- (c) This section was also well answered and ITCLC labelling is well known.

DESIGN AND TEXTILES

Paper 9631/04
Coursework

General comments

There was some excellent practical work showing attention to detail, a variety of fabrics and many different textile processes. Some of the folders were also excellent but there were some which had not included enough information in some of the sections – details are given below.

Not all candidates had written the required 1,000 words per item or 3,000 words overall. It is possible to provide good coursework in less than the recommended number of words but it is often the case that the very short pieces of coursework are due to not enough explanation or justification, or only a very brief evaluation being written.

A wide range of work was submitted for this specification. All candidates had submitted three projects as specified. This varied as to whether it was one theme with three projects within it, or three different themes. For example, 'Nature' or 'Teenage fashion wear' were two project themes, within which three projects were worked. Some candidates selected three completely different projects.

Popular choices included: teenage fashion wear, items for children, household furnishings, bags for a particular purpose, etc.

Administration

Almost all the work was adequately labelled although a few pieces did not have the required label. This is available for copying, in the syllabus booklet. Each folder and item must be clearly and securely labelled. It is a requirement that the correct label is used and signed by the head teacher. None of the folders were annotated, although this is mentioned in the syllabus. It is also a requirement that teachers should indicate whether the work is of high, middle or low band, following the marking scheme in the syllabus. This guide is very helpful to the examiner when marking the work.

Folders

It is suggested that the folders have soft card covers, although many candidates had sent hard covered sketchbooks. The size of folders was usually A4 or A3 as recommended. Most sketchbooks were well labelled with the label which is printed in the syllabus booklet. Many candidates spaced out their work well with spaces between fabric samples/seam samples etc. but in some cases the work of two pages could easily have been grouped together and submitted on one page. This would have reduced the thickness of some of the folders. There are marks for the presentation of the folder (in the evaluation section), and so there should be close attention to detail and contents.

Some of the folders could have included more detail and this is where marks were lost. The written work to back up the practical work is an important part of the coursework and enough time in the course must be allowed for this. The various sections are clearly laid out in the specification and should be followed carefully.

A good number of projects had appendices attached which contained surveys, interviews, extra research information and book/Internet references. This is very welcome and to be commended. It was pleasing to see that many candidates had edited their research to find the most appropriate to use in their sketchbooks/folders to further their project. However, there were a number of other folders where information had been copied from websites and no acknowledgement had been given. This is to be discouraged as information of this kind needs to be edited and written in the candidate's own words.

A working mark sheet accompanied almost all folders although some of these had not been filled in. It is helpful if teachers indicate mark bands and marks. The syllabus has this well laid out so it should be straightforward to follow the mark bands.

Most candidates had set a task themselves, and the subject matter/titles and aims ranged widely. There were quite a few folders where a task had been set but no aims had been written. The syllabus states that for a high band, this needs to be included.

Research was usually well done with photographs taken, notes and justification given and clear aims of how the project would progress further. There were a number of projects however, where this was not well done, there was little research and the candidate decided on the item to be made with few reasons given or relevant context stated.

Recommendations

Use soft card covered sketchbooks, rather than stiff mounting board.

Careful presentation should be given to all work in the folder, which includes avoiding large blank spaces.

There is no need for plastic wallets for every page.

Suitable binding should be chosen, spiral or hole-punched and tied together.

Research, aims and analysis of task / Planning and development

Planning was a weak area in a number of projects. Folders did not always have evidence of the planning and development process. The marking criteria clearly explains what should be included in this section.

The generation of ideas was variable. In some projects, there were many fashion sketches showing variations of different garments which could be made. Where these had notes, this formed part of the design process where decisions were being made. The sketches should clearly be related to the research work done. There were a number of candidates who showed only one sketch, usually the 'final' one, and no others were included. Judgements and choices are marked in this section so candidates should state their reasons for choosing a particular design. It could relate to ease of making, or a time factor, or the most appropriate design work after doing research.

Resource materials and methods relate directly to the trial pieces/experimental work. The syllabus states that there should be a design specification for the product to be made.

A plan of action/plan of work is also to be included but there were a large number of folders which did not have a design specification or a plan of work. It is harder for candidates to make decisions and write an evaluation of these key areas when plans of action/plans of work have been missed out. In a few cases, the design specification was presented as a 'shopping list' of items needed and some credit was given for this. If this is included, it should have details of the fabrics/material needed for making the item.

The plan of action is designed to make future plans and candidates need to write a list of the main stages of making the item. This is particularly important in that three projects are worked for this coursework and enough time should be allowed for each one.

There were a number of submissions where there were two very good pieces of work, with a third piece being very simple, having been rushed, due to lack of time. A time plan should be written to help the candidate with time management for the coursework as a whole. This could include exactly what is to be done not just for each project, with time scales for all three projects, but also includes the production of the completed coursework.

There were a number of candidates who had researched one theme and then had not developed it in three different ways to produce the three items. If one theme is chosen, there should be three distinct areas of development from the research, which cover three different areas of the syllabus.

The design specification had often been omitted. This is a list of points which should address the item to be made. For example, size of item, colour of item, type of fabric (fibre content/name), type of seams/stitches to be used, width of seams, size of stitches, seam finishes to be used, equipment/machines required, dyes to be used (if dyeing fabric), embroidery thread to be used (if doing hand/machine embroidery), thread to be used (colour, type), etc.

The development work in the planning could include trial textile pieces where different seam finishes, seam widths, different colours of dye, different embroidery stitches, hand or machine embroidery are tried out. Many candidates had done this but had not always written up the results or explained their choices.

Teachers should encourage candidates to record the different steps taken to achieve the desired results. Some had tried one or two samples and had done no more. This area of the project would have many discussion points which could be discussed further in the evaluation section. The trial pieces and samples could be included here or in the implementation/process section. (Credit was also given for this under 'planning')

Information was usually clearly laid out and the presentation of some of the folders was to be commended. Considerable time and care had been taken over this and these projects were a pleasure to read and mark. There are clearly some very creative candidates who have taken this course of study.

Implementation

This section is related to the use of skills and resources and is the area which teachers should note carefully throughout the course, to facilitate marking. Folders should be annotated by the teachers as candidates complete each section during their course. The syllabus asks that the work is annotated.

Some candidates had taken photographs of the making process which is to be commended. (However, where candidates had used the services of a specialist craftsman for a particular reason, this should be clearly stated in the plan and in the process section – the work which the candidate has done for themselves must be clearly identified as their own work - otherwise it is hard to award marks.)

There was some excellent work showing perfect making skills and techniques. Centres are to be commended for the high standard of this work. There was also evidence of some really creative ideas and work based on the research material, Centres are to be commended for this also.

Many candidates had written comments about the problems they had encountered and how they had overcome them. This is an important part of the development and making process. In many cases, fabrics used were difficult to handle and candidates had considered carefully the best way forward. There were some well analysed pieces of work and there was further discussion in the evaluation section. (The written work for this area could be included in this section or in the evaluation section.)

Realisation – quality of outcome

Practical work

A wide variety of items was made: tops, dresses, shorts, cushion covers, quilts, bed linen, and bags.

One of the reasons for having a detailed design specification is to be able to make sure that the item made follows this closely. If changes need to be made, this should also be recorded in the evaluation. It also gives much opportunity for comments to be made in the evaluation section later. There were some outstanding pieces of practical work showing excellent practical skills and techniques and full marks were awarded in many cases.

Most work was very well made with some of an excellent standard.

Evaluation

Appropriate media was often used to write various parts of the submission. ICT was used effectively although where candidates had hand-written notes it was often very well presented and clear to read. Some candidates had not taken care over their presentation and work was not labelled or explained by the candidates.

The evaluation section was the area of the project which was the least well done. In some cases this was omitted altogether so no marks could be awarded. Some credit was given, however, for the presentation of folders, which is also marked in this section.

The evaluation section is clearly described in the syllabus, and the marking criteria are banded. This means that the evaluation needs to be banded first and then specific marks can be awarded within each band.

The evaluation was much easier for candidates to write if clear aims had been written at the start of the project. The candidates needed to state whether the aims had been achieved. Some evaluations only had a few comments on the difficulties or problems candidates faced but candidates need to try to be positive and state their strengths too. A balanced view is needed. Each area of the project should be looked at and commented upon: how effective the research was, was enough planning done, was the design specification detailed enough, was the plan of action accurate, or was something omitted.

Future developments were often missed and only a very few candidates commented on this. Some candidates had produced a survey in the evaluation, where the target audience had been able to comment on the final outcome. This was an excellent way of getting feedback about the item made.

Other points

There were many very large items which made for difficulties with packing and storage. Items should be of A4 or maximum A3 size. This enables the examiners to handle the work. Where an item is very bulky perhaps a photograph or similar record, showing the inside as well as outside of the item, could be sent in order to assess the standard. Most of the items were of an excellent standard. Teachers are encouraged to annotate the project work, as stated in the syllabus, to help the examiner assess the standard of work presented by the candidates.