

FAQs for 9631 A Level Design and Textiles

Q. What is the course book?

A. No one book is prescribed. There are a number of suggested textbooks given in the resources list at

<http://www.cie.org.uk/CIE/WebSite/qualificationsandawardshub/qualificationhubs/generalqualsubject/resourcelist>

The books contain material that is suitable for use with this syllabus. The content of the books does not necessarily cover the whole of the CIE syllabus and teachers may wish to select more than one book in order to cover the entire content of the syllabus.

You could also look at the following:

Giles R. – Needlework – Methuen

Ladbury – Fabrics – Sidgewick and Jackson

Taylor M.A. Technology of Textile properties

Websites can also provide useful information. A list of websites is given in the resources list, same address as above.

Q.I am having problems getting hold of the recommended books. Can you help?

A. Most of the texts can be obtained over the Internet. The following web-sites may be of interest:

www.amazon.co.uk

Q. What support materials are available?

- Syllabus – details of the content and how to plan for and assess the Practical Test and Coursework are given in the syllabus. It is essential that Centres refer to the syllabus. Copies of the working documents needed for the Practical Test and Coursework are available in the printed syllabus or in the online version at www.cie.org.uk
- Specimen Question Papers and Mark Schemes
- All the above are available on the Teacher Support Site and from CIE Publications

Q. What is the scheme of assessment for AS and A Level?

A. There are four parts to the scheme of assessment for the full Design and Textiles A Level. Candidates may apply for an AS award at the end of one year and then add the A Level paper and coursework before applying for an A Level award the following year. Alternatively, candidates may take all papers at the end of their course.

The Advanced Subsidiary (AS) forms 50% of the assessment weighting of the full A Level. The AS can be taken as a stand-alone syllabus or as the first part of the full A Level course.

The A Level candidates must take, in addition to the AS paper and Practical, the A Level paper and coursework.

Candidates must take the following combinations of papers:

AS	Fibres and Fabrics, Design and AS Practical
Advanced Level	Candidates take the above Modules and Textile Applications, Textile Technology and A Level Coursework

AS LEVEL

Paper	Name	Duration	Detail	Marks on paper	Weighting of AS
1	Fibres and Fabrics Design	2 hour written paper	Section A – two compulsory structured/data response questions Section B – one structured essay question from a choice of two	75	50%
2	Practical	7 hours	Additional information is given in the syllabus booklet and Appendix	100	50%

ADVANCED LEVEL

Paper	Name	Duration	Detail	Marks on Paper	Weighting	
					AS	A Level
1	Fibres and Fabrics Design	2 hour written paper	Section A – two compulsory structured/data response questions Section B – one structured essay question from a choice of two	75	50%	25%
2	Practical	7 hours	Additional information is given in the syllabus booklet and Appendix	100	50%	25%
3	Textile Applications Textile Technology	2 hour written paper	Section A – two compulsory questions which test the candidates understanding of the connections between the different elements of the subject Section B – consists of essay questions where the candidate will be required to answer two out of three questions	100	-	25%
4		Coursework	Additional information is given in the syllabus booklet and Appendix	100	-	25%

Q. When are the examinations?

A. This syllabus is available for examination in November only. Coursework submissions should be sent to CIE in October of the year of examination.

Q. When should I plan the Practical Test and how is it administered?

Full details and suggestions are given in the syllabus. An extract is given below – Preparation of Practical Test Task.

The Practical test will be a teacher-set task based on the making-up of a garment which allows candidates to demonstrate planning and practical techniques and skills. Centres must supply Candidates with a copy of the task sheet and a paper pattern on which the tasks are based. A new set of tasks should be set each year.

Instructions for the **preparation** of the **Practical Test Task Sheet** and for the conduct of the Practical examination session are given in the syllabus. Please ensure these instructions are followed. An interval has to be allowed between the planning session and the practical test to permit ordering of test materials, but schools should not organise any practice which has a bearing on the examination between the planning session and the practical test.

Instructions for Candidates – A blank copy of the Practical Test Task Sheet for Candidates is provided in the Appendix of the syllabus. Centres should use this as a template for their candidates.

PREPARATION OF PRACTICAL TEST TASK

An examination date between August and October is to be chosen by the Centre. All work must be submitted by 31 October for marking by CIE.

The Centre should ensure that:

- 1 **SIX MONTHS PRIOR (or earlier)** to the day of the examination the teacher identifies a pattern for the practical test. The tasks and required pattern alteration should be formulated and the Centre should prepare the PRACTICAL TEST TASK SHEET and a mark scheme for the test. A teacher should work the test to check timings, the level of difficulty of the tasks and the application of the mark scheme. Centres may send a copy of the test to CIE for our consideration and comment.
- 2 **THREE MONTHS PRIOR (or earlier)** to the day of examination the Centre purchases/copies the correct number and sizes of PATTERNS for each candidate and prints/copies the Candidate Instructions, the PRACTICAL TEST TASK SHEET, shopping list, time plans etc for each candidate. A copy of the PRACTICAL TEST TASK SHEET, the shopping list and time plan should be placed in the pattern envelope for each candidate.

THE PRACTICAL TEST – CONDUCT OF EXAMINATION

- 3 **TASK ANALYSIS AND PLANNING** - one and a half hours is allowed for this part of the examination.
A maximum of **ONE SCHOOL WEEK** before the start of the Practical Test the teacher is asked to hand to each candidate a pattern envelope containing a PATTERN for the test, a copy of the Candidate Instructions, the PRACTICAL TEST TASK SHEET, shopping list and planning sheets and an Answer Booklet/Paper.
- 4 Drafting, tracing and drawing paper, pins, pencil, biro and a tape measure should be provided. At the end of one and a half hours all pattern envelopes and candidates' work must be returned to the teacher and locked away. The teacher should retain a copy of the shopping list for each candidate.
- 5 The copy of the shopping list is to be retained by the teacher, who is asked to make sure, during the week immediately preceding the examination, that the fabric and other requirements specified in the candidate's shopping list are provided. Wherever

possible, the candidate should be given the opportunity to select the fabric. Where this is not practical, the fabric provided should conform as closely as possible to the candidate's specifications.

- 6 **THE PREPARATION SESSION** - two hours are allowed for this part of the test and should be supervised under the usual examination conditions. Practical Test Task sheets, patterns etc. should be locked away until the day of the preparation session when they should be handed back to the candidates for preliminary work on the test which will include adapting/altering the pattern, cutting out, marking, preparation for fitting and any other work which may be suggested in the Practical Test Task sheet. The pattern envelopes and all other test materials, except for the item on which the candidate has been instructed to work before the Examination Session, should be returned to the Supervisor at the end of two hours.

N.B. It is important that candidates try on the test piece for the first time before the commencement of the examination. Candidates whose work is unfinished after two hours should be allowed to complete the preparation for fitting, still under supervision, immediately after the preparation session. A note should be added to the mark sheet to indicate the amount of extra time taken.
- 7 **IMPLEMENTATION - CARRY OUT PLANNED TEST** Three hours are allowed for this part of the examination. On the day of the examination each candidate is asked to have ready all the usual sewing requirements.
- 8 The question paper, pattern, test materials and the shopping list are to be returned to each candidate **30 minutes** before the examination commences.
- 9 **Before** the examination candidates must prepare labels showing their names, candidate numbers and Centre number; these are to be attached to the work done during the examination.
- 10 There should be sufficient table space allowed for work by each candidate. Facilities for pressing must be provided.
- 11 The teacher is to supervise the planned test, but **should not help or guide** candidates in any way.
- 12 A first-aid box, a reliable clock and a full length mirror should be provided.
- 13 **EVALUATION** - Candidates are to be given a further 30 minutes to complete their evaluation. This should be carried out within one day of the test. Evaluation comments could include an analysis of how successfully the test turned out, problems encountered, what could have been done differently.
- 14 At the end of the practical examination session, **ALL** practical work together with the relevant documentation – e.g. Practical Test Task Sheet, mark scheme, working mark sheets, signed statements from Principals, shopping lists etc. – **MUST** be posted to CIE for marking.
- 15 The work done during the examination will be returned to the school after the results of the examination have been released.

Q. What should I consider when designing the practical test?

The following points should be kept in mind when finalising the tasks:

- (a) There are **5 main tasks/assessment points** in the main task. There should be similar levels of ease or difficulty for each 10 mark task.

- Consider whether the alteration should be allocated marks – is it difficult? Is it assessed separately? Does it involve any further processes?
- Consider the difficulty of the task when allocating marks – is more than one process involved?
- Small or simple tasks could be grouped together to make them up to 10 marks e.g. sewing on a button, with a buttonhole could be grouped together for 10 marks
- Group similar tasks/processes together to make up 10 marks e.g. all seams for 10 marks rather than just side seams etc. This makes it easier to mark.
- Choose a variety of processes and avoid repetition between tests / within tests

(b) **Trialling**

Make sure the practical test has been tried out before hand.

The task should be trialled by a colleague to test the timing and difficulty as follows:

- Task Analysis and Planning (1½hours)
- Preparation and pattern alteration (2 hours)
- Implementation (carry out the test)
 - Organisation and time management
 - Making up - the five main tasks mentioned above
- Evaluation (½hour)

Once the test has been trialled, **a mark scheme** should also be made available to the colleague so that they can assess the work and check that the mark scheme is accurate. The colleague should check that the mark scheme matches the tasks and that the allocation of marks is clear and fair.

(c) **Marking and Mark Scheme**

Mark ranges are divided into 3 bands:

High (best quality work)

Middle (sound, competent work)

Low (basic quality, may not be a pass)

When making comments on the practical tests, teachers could indicate which band the candidates work fits into.

It may be that a candidate fits into the high band in one section, the middle band in another

The marks will be added together and the total mark will indicate the overall grade

Suggested mark scheme for Making Up (50 marks in total)

(Only two examples are given - The Centre will need to provide full detail for **each** part.)

List of processes	Details of Process	Brief Mark Scheme
Back and Front yokes	Stay stitching; matched notches, regular stitches, even depth of seam	0 – 5 marks 0 – 5 marks
Side seams	Neat ,regular stitches, even depth of seam	0 – 5 marks
Zip insertion	etc	etc
Waist facing	etc	etc
Hem	etc	etc

Q How can help my students evaluate their work?

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?

It is good practice to start candidates doing this from the beginning i.e. after the first piece of written work or practical work, and at regular stages during their studies. Also get them to evaluate each other's work. For example, they can compare each other's plans - did the original plan cover all the techniques – or they can compare each other's work - what was the accuracy/workmanship like? The teacher (and the other students) should offer constructive advice...e.g.' what about doing it a different way? When Ietc.

Get the students to think about their work as early in the course as possible. Do not leave this type of thinking and writing until just before the examination. Allow the candidates to practice evaluating their own, and each other's work, through out the course so that they are confident about how to respond in the examination.

Here are some questions which candidates could ask as part of the evaluation:

1 Task Analysis and Planning

Did you do enough planning for your task? Which area of the task did you plan well? Which area of the task could you have improved on?

2 Preparation

Ask questions related to: plan of action; time plan; resources used; methods used; fitting the garment, etc

3 Implementation (Carry out test)

Ask questions related to: Organisation and Management, course of action; equipment used; appropriate time scales; responding to unforeseen circumstances;

Making up the item: quality of practical skills; realisation of item; technical competence of practical task;

4 Evaluation

Ask questions related to: Strengths and Weaknesses; relevant comments made; appropriate evidence given, etc

Q. How do I mark the Practical Test?

Details of the criteria for assessment, together with an indication of marks to be awarded in the High, Mid and Low range, are given in the syllabus.

- Task Analysis and Planning (1½hours) 0 – 10 marks
- Preparation and pattern alteration (2 hours) 0 – 20 marks
- Implementation (carry out the test) (3 hours)
 Organisation and time management 0 – 10 marks
 Making up 0 – 50 marks (the five main tasks given in the test and mark scheme)
- Evaluation (½hour) 0 -10 marks

The results should be recorded on a **Practical Test Mark Sheet** – a blank copy of this sheet is provided in the Appendix of the syllabus.

Centres should use this as a template for recording the work of candidates. Teachers are encouraged to comment on the candidate's work by completing a working mark sheet for each candidate, which should be submitted with the practical work. The practical test will then be marked by CIE, using comments and mark sheets from the Centre as a guide.

Q. When should the candidates do the A Level coursework?

A Level coursework builds on and develops the knowledge, understanding and skills established at AS. Candidates would normally undertake their final coursework in the second year of the course.

However, it is a good idea for the candidates to begin on small coursework tasks in the first year, once they have learned about a particular topic in the syllabus. For example class work on different types of buttonholes and fastenings could lead to a short piece of coursework on the topic where they are asked to design and make different types of buttonholes for a particular kind of jacket or skirt. They could then comment on which is the best etc. These short tasks would **not** be part of the final coursework but will make the students think about how to plan a design, make it up and then comment on their work and suggest improvements.

The beginning of the second year of the course is usually best for planning and to begin making the coursework pieces which will be submitted for marking. Please make sure that the students record all the different stages of their work and that the final folder is clear and methodical.

Q. What topics can be studied in the A Level Coursework?

At this level candidates will be required to select their own context and develop their own task, having identified a specific area of interest arising from the content of Textile Applications and Textile Technology as given in the syllabus.

Each investigative piece includes analysis/research, planning and development, implementation and evaluation. There is a list of possible topics in the syllabus at **Appendix 2 – A Level INVESTIGATIVE COURSEWORK – Suggested topics**. The suggestions are starting points and could be used to write specific design briefs to produce **either** one individual creative item **or** three related items. The three items can share a common theme but the folder must contain the developmental work for **each** one.

The work must include a variety of hand and machine processes. Reference to the marking criteria in the syllabus will exemplify these requirements further.

Q. What Coursework needs to be submitted?

A. The coursework submitted by each candidate must include:

- **Three** investigative items or pieces of coursework. These three items must be from different areas of the syllabus **or** they can be three **different** types of items which share a common theme. Please refer to the suggested list of topics in the syllabus for clarification (Appendix 2).
- A **folder** which demonstrates the research, planning, implementation and evaluation undertaken by the candidate for each item (approximately 1000 words per item).

Q. Is it necessary to send detailed descriptions of each coursework item?

Yes. These should be in the folder. The folder should have a description of the planning, design and production of all the items

The folder should contain information on how the student went about the planning and making of the garments. This involves describing the planning, development and actions taken and could involve designs, pieces of fabrics, explanations, plan of action, strengths and weaknesses etc. In this way the candidates shows how they developed the work for each of the items listed above, and whether the work meets the requirements. Even a list of the items used like threads, needles, cloth is useful here because these lists illustrate the planning and

making of the coursework items. For example a candidate may have originally chosen a black cotton thread to begin making a garment. It was then found that this thread was not strong enough or was the wrong colour for the fabric, so a different type and colour of thread was eventually used. This would be explained in the folder, with examples.

There is a maximum word count of 1000 words per item, with an overall word count of 3000 words, but it is recognised that good submissions may use fewer words.

The work must include a reasonable amount of hand and machine sewing and a variety of processes, and cover different areas of the syllabus.

Q. How do I mark the coursework?

The criteria for assessment, together with an indication of marks to be awarded in the High, Mid and Low range, are given in the syllabus. Coursework at A Level can involve a range of approaches to include creative, design and make, practical application and investigative. The marks are allocated as follows:

- 1 Research, Aims and Analysis of Tasks (15 Marks)
- 2 Planning and Development (20 Marks)
- 3 Implementation (40 Marks) [Process - 25 Marks; Realisation - 15 Marks]
- 4 Evaluation (25 Marks)

The marking of Coursework submissions by the Centres can be shown through clearly annotated comments in the coursework folder. The comments should provide details on the level of the candidate's work. It is suggested that the Centre annotates at the side of the text:

- where the assessment criteria have been met;
- to show the level of response that has been achieved by the candidate in meeting the specified assessment criteria e.g. low (L), middle (M), or high (H).

Annotation should identify positive achievement by the candidate and could be extended by applying particular phrases from the assessment criteria.

In the marking of the coursework component, comments and remarks made by teachers must be in accordance with the marking criteria specified. It is essential that within each Centre candidates assigned to different teaching groups are internally standardised so that the assessments generate a single reliable order of merit. Marks will be awarded on the content of the submission.

All coursework will be finally marked by CIE, with reference to the comments and annotations provided by the Centre. All coursework should be submitted to CIE by the dates given in the timetable.

Q. Will CIE supply copies of the relevant paperwork for the Practical Test and for the Coursework?

No. These are generic forms which do not change between sessions. Copies of the different forms for the Practical Test and the A level Coursework are available in the syllabus for the Centre to photocopy and distribute to candidates and teachers. Copies can also be downloaded from the electronic copy of the syllabus at www.cie.org.uk

Q. Is International A level equivalent to UK A level and how do universities regard International A level?

A. Yes, the International A level is equivalent to an UK A level and is of an equivalent standard. The best place to find out about acceptability of CIE examinations by British universities is the UCAS website at www.ucas.co.uk/quals/intquals/apps.html.