

**GCSE**

**Design and Technology: Textiles Technology**

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J307**

**OCR Report to Centres June 2015**

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

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## A571 Introduction to designing and making

### General Comments:

This report provides an overview of the work seen in the Controlled Assessment Units A571 - Introduction to Designing and Making and A573 – Making Quality Products, for candidates who took the examination during this session.

This report has been prepared by the Principal Moderator and Team Leaders and covers the specification J307. It should be read in conjunction with the marking criteria for assessment outlined in the specification and the Moderator's 'Report to Centre'.

This is the sixth examination year for the Innovator Suite Specification in Textiles Technology J307. Entries have been seen for both Units A571 and A573 this session.

### CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT – J307

Controlled Assessment for this specification can be submitted by post or as an electronic version via the OCR Repository. Where Centres submitted portfolios for electronic assessment, moderation was efficient and effective.

**Important Note:** Centres must ensure that if candidates are entered through the repository (01), the marks must be downloaded onto the OCR site and **NOT** sent through to the moderator on a disc. This is classed as being a postal (02) moderation.

Centres submitting portfolios by post for the June series have been prompt in the dispatch of documentation; MS1 and form CCS160 to OCR and moderators. **It is important for Centres to note that form CCS160 needs to be sent with the MS1 to the moderator.**

Most Centres have made clear links to the sustainability/recycling aspect of the specification for Unit 1, either through the theme selected or points covered in the candidate specification. This is to be commended.

Most Centres are to be commended on the amount of work produced for the portfolios, which has been realistic in terms of the amount. There is concern that some Centres are spending more than the allocated time of 20 hours producing the work. Care needs to be taken here.

All Centres seen this series included a Coursework Summary Form (CSF) or cover sheet illustrating the breakdown of individual marks for each candidate.

Centres are reminded that it is not necessary to make reference to, or include notes about specific industrial methods of production within Units A571 or A573.

Candidates continue to enhance the background to their portfolio work and whilst this can be attractive, it can distract from the work, making it difficult to decipher the content. Centres need to be mindful to this, as marks may be compromised if work cannot be clearly read.

It is a requirement for the Controlled Assessment Unit A571 component to consist of one portfolio where candidates are expected to design and make a **prototype textile product**. The Specification clearly states in the Making criteria that materials selected must be 'appropriate to realise the **textile** product'. Centres must ensure therefore, that candidates produce a prototype that is textile based.

The portfolio work **only** needs to be seen during moderation. Centres are requested not to send any practical work with the portfolio. Similarly, the Centre only needs to forward the portfolios of the selected sample.

Work should be removed from heavy ring binders, presented so that pages can be turned without having to remove sheets from plastic wallets and securely fastened together e.g. by means of a tag, then clearly labelled with Centre Number, Name and Candidate Number. Mark sheet/annotation sheet should be attached to each piece of work.

**Note: Paper clips and elastic bands are not robust enough to keep the portfolio together and should be avoided.**

## THEMES SET

Candidates must select **one** of the eleven published themes from the specification. Starting points linked to the theme may be modified to suit candidate and/or Centre circumstances. However, the theme itself must **not** be altered.

The themes most popular this series for Unit A571 were 'Flash from Trash', 'Eco-wear', 'Recycling Denim' and 'Embellishment'.

The themes most popular this series for Unit A573 were 'Twentieth Century Influences', 'Historical Origins' and 'Natural Influences'.

**Important:** Centres need to ensure that the theme and starting point is clearly stated on the front of each portfolio or on the Controlled Assessment Cover Form (CCF) which includes a 'Task Title' box allowing space for the theme to be entered.

Centres have been realistic in the setting of tasks this examination session.

Care must be taken to ensure that the candidate does not mistake the starting point for their design brief. Marks may be compromised if the candidate's own design brief is not evident in the portfolio.

## APPLICATION OF THE ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

On the whole centres have interpreted the marking criteria well, applying the marks appropriately and fairly across all criteria areas. **However, it has been necessary, in some instances this series, to make adjustments to bring candidate's marks in line with the agreed National 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 portfolio.**

**Point to note:** The Report to Centres is an important document where issues raised from moderation are highlighted and suggestions for improvement given. It is recommended that all staff responsible for the delivery of this specification read this document thoroughly.

## ANNOTATION OF THE CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT PORTFOLIO AND RECORDING OF MARKS

It is pleasing to see that centres are using the Controlled Assessment Cover Sheet; CCF, issued by OCR, showing where and how the marks have been awarded for each assessment area. This has greatly helped in making the moderation process quicker, fairer and more accurate and

is particularly helpful in the moderation of the 'Making' section where there are larger mark ranges.

**Important** - The understanding and solving of technical problems (4 marks for Unit 1 and 6 marks for Unit 3) is a marking strand that needs to be evident in the **writing of the key stages of making** in order for the higher mark to be awarded. This section caused the most concern this session once again with Centres awarding full marks for very little evidence. Care must be taken here.

On the whole, centres have recorded and totalled marks accurately this session, which is to be commended.

It is helpful to encourage candidates to organise the portfolios according to the criteria areas. This reduces the need to annotate the work itself and makes identifying marks during moderation easier and quicker. It was noticeable this series that candidates had presented their portfolio's with care and thought. Centres are to be commended for this practice.

#### **Points to note:**

- It is important that candidates include **acknowledgements or a bibliography** in the portfolio. There was a noticeable increase once again this series, in the number of candidate portfolios without reference to research sources.
- It is essential that the candidate includes photographic evidence of their prototype/product in the portfolio. 'A minimum of two digital images/photographs of the final product' is required in the evaluation section. (4.1 of the specification). Photographic evidence of the key stages of production is also required in the 'Making' section of the marking criteria for controlled assessments (Appendix B of the specification). Marks may be compromised if candidates do not provide sufficient evidence of making.

#### **COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL CRITERIA AREAS:**

##### **Cultural Understanding**

In most cases candidates work towards a design brief by analysing examples of how designing and making reflects and influences culture and society.

If a questionnaire was used, successful candidates analysed the results in relation to user lifestyle, personal choice and the design need. However, it was noticeable this series that more candidates relied upon quantity rather than quality, with a lot of time being directed into producing a questionnaire and analysing every question whether relevant or not. This can be completed through a written summary only; the actual questionnaire does not need to be evident in the portfolio.

It has been noticeable this series that candidates are answering this section better, although it is still one of the areas causing the most problems for candidates.

Research is concise, accurate and relevant. **However, there are still some candidates who have not specifically linked research to the theme or starting point**, this being the main reason why marks have been compromised. For example, candidates do not need to include facts about the different types of recycling, smart and modern materials, the 6R's or information relating to the history of a product, unless the candidate uses their findings to make informed decisions.

Where Centres scored highly in this section, the work was clearly focussed, was often short in length and had clear purpose.

**Important:** Care needs to be taken to ensure that the candidate does not write the design brief too early in the portfolio, thus stifling a range of creative and varied design ideas from being developed. This was still a concern this session with many portfolios illustrating a lack of design variety.

## **Creativity**

On the whole centres have tackled this criteria area with confidence. Research was relevant and appropriate to the theme. It was encouraging to see Centres suggesting appropriate research into sustainable design and the 6 R's in relation to designer and high street products relevant to the candidate starting point, for example, Gary Harvey's use of recycled textile products to re-create innovative garments.

**Centres need to be mindful that copious notes based around the 6R's, recycling and sustainability are not a requirement of this unit.**

Good use of the internet has been seen, with centres ensuring that internet research is only one aspect of candidate's research and does not exclude other, relevant avenues. However, it is evident that candidates are not acknowledging sources when used and this is an area that needs addressing by Centres. Candidates would further benefit from in-depth analysis of data relating to the principles of good design and the products available on the high street.

Few candidates fully demonstrated creative competence. The higher attaining candidates very successfully, and with creative competence, analysed their products showing clear and appropriate design and make direction.

They were able to:

- illustrate how the use of past and present trends have helped to inform design ideas and high street trends, with many candidates capitalising upon the wealth of ideas available from designers, fashion era's, high street stores etc.
- **choose existing products appropriate to their theme and starting point.** These were investigated and evaluated in depth, with relevant conclusions drawn.

## **Designing**

Most candidates have a clear understanding of the difference between the theme, starting point and the design brief. However, care must be taken here to ensure that the design brief has been developed as a considered response through appropriate research into the starting point. Candidates cannot be credited marks for identifying the starting point as the design brief.

Similarly, the design brief should not be made too early in the portfolio or too detailed, as this can inhibit creativity in the designing section. Design briefs need to be kept 'brief', to the point, not hold too many decisions about the product and not become too lengthy and lacking in focus.

Most candidates presented specifications of a suitable standard this session - the best of these:

- being detailed and providing the basis for design and development work in later criteria areas
- incorporating a reference to environmental awareness/sustainable design

- **referencing the production of a working prototype NOT a ‘quality’ product.**

Specifications with ‘how to achieve’ points are not substantial enough for the higher marks and greater care must be taken here by candidates.

It was noticed this session that very few specifications referred to a prototype product being made for this unit with many referencing ‘quality’ as a bullet point. Care must be taken here.

Designing is still enjoyed by most candidates and some good work has been seen, which is to be commended. This said, **it was a concern to see that this section was one of the least well- executed areas of the portfolio once again this session. The quality and variety of sketching and range of methods used were not particularly polished or very creative.**

Care must also be taken to ensure that the ideas presented by the candidate are different in style and shape, not just colour and pattern for the higher marks. Unit 1 requires the candidate to produce a wide range of ideas based around the theme. For example, close-up sections of product details, a range of products (accessories, garments, soft furnishings).

**There is increased evidence of candidates still fully evaluating their design ideas against the specification for this unit.** This is not a requirement for Unit 1. It is sufficient to annotate/label the important fabric/component details only.

Candidates who achieve high marks will have:

- Presented a wide range of freestyle illustrated and annotated design proposals/sketches and identified the final idea. These will have been annotated referencing important features, components and materials/fabrics only.
- Included creative and original ideas that are fully developed into a final idea with some modelling relevant to the theme.

Good modelling of a whole product or important features/details of an item (in paper or fabric) helps the candidate to access the higher marks and to realise the textile prototype product.

## **Making**

It is noticeable this series that candidates are moving towards producing less complex, prototype products which can be completed within the recommended time limit of 12 hours for this criteria area. This is to be commended. However, Centres need to be careful that products requiring less skill, do not compromise the high mark.

The Specification clearly states in the Making criteria that materials selected must be ‘appropriate to realise the **textile** product’. Centres must ensure therefore, that candidates produce a prototype that is textile based.

Teacher annotation in this section showing how marks have been awarded continues to be most helpful to assist accurate moderation and this is to be encouraged.

Candidates that did well have:

- Made detailed references to an appropriate production system/step by step plan which is relevant to the actual textile prototype made.



- **Highlighted all technical problems (in writing)** encountered through the making process. This helps to structure in-depth and rigorous analysis of the making and design process.
- Produced a chart with column headings. For example, ‘making my product’, ‘problems encountered with solutions’, ‘photographic evidence’. This allows candidates to show a better understanding of the making process, encouraging the inclusion of more in-depth detail.
- Included the use of ICT to produce effective work-flow charts.
- Used **good quality photographic evidence and comprehensive notes, to show the key stages of making the prototype textile product/item**. This helps to reinforce decisions made about alterations/modifications, choice of components etc and is to be encouraged in helping the candidate to highlight good working practice. (Key stages can be defined as the following: pattern lay, cutting out, marking of important features, sewing stages, insertion of fastenings, stages of a technique and/or construction/decorative feature, finishing detail, final product)

#### Points to note:

- Care and attention to the details in this criteria area was varied and often this area was over-marked, with too much weight given to the solving technical problems in particular. **There must be written evidence for the higher marks**. It is not enough for the centre to annotate that problems were encountered and solved.
- Technical vocabulary and detail was often missing when describing the stages of manufacture.
- Centres need to remember that comprehensive notes **AND** photographic evidence of the key stages of production, need to be evident for the higher marks. It was noticeable this session that candidates had not included enough clear photographic evidence of the making process for the marks awarded.

#### Critical Evaluation

It is still a concern to see that the majority of candidates have tended to evaluate the portfolio and final realisation against the specification. **This is not a requirement for Unit 1**. Candidates should **only** evaluate the processes involved in making and designing the prototype product.

Candidates who had evaluated the making process had done this well and achieved full marks.

Further developments by better candidates identified modifications to their own production system rather than the actual prototype product. Weaker candidates were restricted in this section when they had not thought through their ideas, and produced a thorough and complete plan of action.

Candidates have benefited from the use of digital photography and **must** present at least **two** photographs of their prototype in this section, (front and back views). Marks could be compromised if photographs are not evident in the portfolio for this section.

It is important to remember that candidates' work should show clear progression and demonstrate an accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) for marks to be awarded in this criteria area. It is difficult to allocate marks within this area, when much of the candidates' work is reliant on

teacher direction or when writing frames and pre-printed sheets have been used to guide candidate response.

It was more noticeable this series that where there was no evaluation evident in the portfolio, Centre's awarded no marks at all. Up to three marks should be added here for SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar).

It is important that high achieving candidates are given the opportunity to show flair and creativity in approaching the assessment criteria.

## A573 Making quality products

### COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL CRITERIA AREAS:

In general, Centres are more accurately marking this piece of controlled assessment with candidates preferring this unit.

#### Designing

Candidates are asked to demonstrate an appropriate response to a design brief initiated from their theme/starting point and produce a specification. Responses therefore need to be relevant, clear and thorough to achieve the high mark.

**Some Centres had spent too much time on research that lacked thorough conclusions.** In a few cases, notes about production methods and how to complete various construction and decorative techniques were included in the portfolio. This is not necessary in Unit 3 and will not be allocated marks.

**Candidates do not need to include a questionnaire or product analysis in this Unit.** It is sufficient to add a detailed and informed personal analysis of aspects of the theme that has inspired the candidate. This information can then help the candidate to formulate a detailed specification.

**It is worth remembering that this section is only allocated 4 marks, which includes the specification and design brief.**

Once again marks were often compromised in this section when design ideas were too similar in style and shape. Candidates are asked to produce a range of creative and original design ideas using appropriate strategies and techniques. Care must be taken to ensure that these designs are different in style and shape, not just in colour and pattern.

Successful candidates are able to:

- Illustrate how the use of past and present trends has helped to inform design ideas, capitalising upon the wealth of inspiration available from designers, fashion era's etc.
- Present their background research based around the theme/starting point concisely and on no more than 4 x A3 sheets
- Write a detailed specification making reference to a quality product, providing the basis for design and development work in later criteria areas.
- Produce a clear, concise design brief.
- Present a wide range of creative and innovative design ideas (up to 6 detailed, not sketches) with care and thought using appropriate strategies from CAD, use of swatches and mixed media illustration work.
- Include detailed annotation of their design ideas in relation to the **specification** and clearly identify their final design idea, with reference to their specification.

**Point to note:** Writing specifications with 'how to achieve' points are not substantial enough for the higher marks.

## **Making**

Many quality items have been seen this session that were worthy of high marks and a joy to see.

**Points to note:** The candidate is required to produce a **quality** product and clearly demonstrate (in writing) how to solve any technical problems they have encountered for the higher marks.

Care must be taken to ensure that there is sufficient visual evidence to support the use of quality checks when making. For example, references to finishing off seam edges, adding a lining.

Marks may be compromised if detailed and clear photographic evidence of the key stages, with reference to quality checks, is not evident within the portfolio. Similarly, care needs to be taken to ensure that photographs are not too small or placed away from the relevant key point.

Teacher annotation in this section showing how marks have been awarded continues to be most helpful to assist accurate moderation and this is to be encouraged.

*NB. Points considered for Unit A571 in this report also apply to this section.*

## **Critical Evaluation**

The Evaluation section was completed with more confidence this year.

Candidates should evaluate the product against the **specification** in this unit and include relevant and detailed testing strategies and identify further modifications for the higher marks.

Candidates should include at least two photographs of their final product. An inside photograph showing finishes, seams etc is encouraged to illustrate the completion of a quality product.

*NB. Points considered for Unit A571 in this report also apply to this section.*

On the whole, candidates have produced very logical and well-organised portfolios for both Units A571 and A573 that have been a pleasure to moderate.

## A575 DT Textile Technology

### General Comments:

This is the second examination in the amended style of paper for this Textiles Technology specification. Candidates have taken one slightly longer examination paper which covered both sustainability and the technical aspects of designing and making. The paper has been marked out of a total of 80 marks.

Overall the paper has performed well and candidates have been able to show some good responses throughout the questions. Any area of the specification can be covered in the examination paper, and it was noted this year that candidates did not have detailed knowledge of moral and cultural issues associated textile fashion products and equally struggled with discussing in depth the benefits of manufacturing in quantity. Candidates appeared to have sufficient time to attempt all questions on the paper. There was little evidence of graffiti on the papers, which suggested candidates used their time available effectively.

Some candidates made use of the additional pages at the end of the examinations paper, but not all indicated they had done this. It is good practice for candidates to annotate if a question is continued. Also, when using the additional space, candidates need to indicate which question they are answering.

### Comments on Individual Questions:

#### Section A

- Q1 The majority of candidates answered correctly but where a wrong answer was given it was usually 'a shop making sweaters'.
- Q2 The high majority of candidates answered correctly
- Q3 Extremely well answered.
- Q4 Most candidates answered correctly. The most common incorrect answers were 'a' and 'd'.
- Q5 Most candidates answered correctly. The most frequent incorrect answer was giving it to a charity shop.
- Q6 Most candidates answered correctly. The most common incorrect answer was 'toxic' or 'harmful'.
- Q7 The majority of candidates answered correctly, however 'Re-think' was a common wrong answer.
- Q8 A surprising number of candidates were not able to answer this and some candidates did not attempt the question at all. De-construct, unpick, recycle were common wrong answers.
- Q9 This question was not well answered and many gave no response. Candidates were unable to name the term 'planned obsolescence' and gave answers such as 'badly made' or 'short life expectancy'
- Q10 This was well answered by the majority of candidates who typically correctly stated fossil, oil or coal.
- Q11 Generally well answered.
- Q12 Generally well answered.
- Q13 Most candidates answered correctly.
- Q14 Generally well answered.
- Q15 The majority of candidates answered correctly.

- Q16ai Candidates frequently gained two or three marks here. Cotton and wool were the most common answers. Linen / flax and silk were also mentioned. Polyester, fleece and nylon were common wrong answers.
- Q16aii This question was well answered with many candidates achieving two or three marks. Biodegradable, sustainable and renewable were the most popular correct answers.
- Q16b Candidates seemed to enjoy this question and there were some creative and clever design ideas with the majority of candidates achieving three or four (full) marks. The most typical answers included adding a hood, adding more buttons or a zip and lining the cape. Some candidates mentioned making it waterproof, making it longer, adding reflective strips or adding pockets.
- Q16c\* This was the first of the banded mark scheme questions where candidates are required to give a detailed thorough response. Good answers gave reference to specific religions and items of clothing, consumers not buying clothing made from real fur or leather, or products made in 'sweatshops'. Some candidates also referred to 'Fair Trade' issues. Some explained how items had been incorporated into popular fashions. Many answers mentioned the need to 'cover up' and links with colour and offensive slogans on T shirts. Centres are reminded that candidates are marked on spelling, punctuation and grammar on this question. An answer shown as a list of bullet points would not achieve high marks.
- Q16di The majority of candidates were able to score marks here with common correct answers being to protect the product and keep it clean. Other correct popular answers seen referred to making it easier to transport, to make it appealing to buyers or to show product information.
- Q16dii This question was well answered. Popular correct answers were plastic, polystyrene and bubble wrap. A few candidate mentioned toxic inks / dyes used for printing.

## Section B

- Q17a Many candidates scored full marks for this question. The most common correct answers were warm, comfortable / soft and hardwearing. Some mentioned it was easy to wash, quick drying and moth proof.
- Q17b This question was quite well answered, with many candidates scoring between 4 and 6 marks. However at times candidates did just repeat words from the question stem rather than giving an example or explanation. Product planning often lacked detail with a few candidates simply saying 'plan how to make it' or 'decide what you will use' with little reference to materials, methods or costings.
- With regards to the three separate areas the most typical answers were:
- Product research: gaining inspiration and finding out what the target market want / need.
  - Product planning: deciding on fabrics and components to use, processes and timings.
  - Product evaluation: identifying good / bad points and suggesting improvements / modifications.
- Q17ci This question was not well answered and several candidates gave a nil response answer here. Few candidates could explain the term pattern grading. Some thought it was to do with the quality of the pattern rather than changing the size.
- Q17cii A mixed response was seen to this question. However some candidates were able to correctly state the meaning of the term pattern grading, with many referring to simply laying the pattern on the fabric.
- Q17d The majority of candidates were able to correctly identify the iron; slightly fewer could identify the over locker, with a surprising amount of candidates referring to it as a sewing machine.
- Centres are reminded that specific technical terminology is required when naming tools and equipment. Some candidates were also able to correctly identify the tracing wheel.

- Q18a This question had mixed response. Candidates produced some excellent design ideas but at times some candidates seemed to forget they were in a Textiles exam and gave generic design ideas. Most candidates gained marks for giving a colour and adding a decoration, for naming textile techniques, mentioning a component or giving measurements. Some candidates also gave a fibre or fabric.
- Q18b Very few candidates scored full marks here. Many knew nanotechnology was 'small' and some mentioned it was linked to atoms or particles. Good answers gave descriptions of very small fibres/ particles and examples of their uses in medicine and conduction. Some candidate's confused a nanotechnology with smart materials and electronic technology and therefore did not achieve marks.
- Q18c\* The second of the banded mark scheme questions was not as well answered by candidates. Many scored marks for an understanding of mass production. Good answers were in more depth and candidates wrote about the benefits for the manufacturer, retailer and consumer. Responses often referred to the speed of production, reduced costs and the amount produced. Some mentioned the use of automated machinery, Cad / CAM and the improved quality of products.
- Q19a This question was well answered. Darts and pleats were the most common correct answers, some candidates mentioned smocking and elastic. Common wrong answers referred to patchwork and appliques.
- Q19b There were some excellent answers where candidates had clearly worked machine quilting. However a few candidates wrongly wrote about pleating and others patchwork. It was pleasing to see a number of excellent sketches and diagrams and these helped define the answers. There were some NRs in this question. .
- Q19c This question was well answered with the majority of candidates. Warmth, comfort, durability and decoration were the most popular correct answers. Most candidates gained two or three marks for this question.
- Q19d This question differentiated well between candidates. Where candidates had worked this technique they were able to describe it very well. Many candidates were able to correctly identify the stages involved in describing the layers of fabric, preparation of marking out, pinning and tacking, reversing at start and finish of sewing and trimming threads. There was some excellent knowledge evidenced in some of the candidate answers, referring to the use of a specialist quilting foot or quilting bed.

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