



General Certificate of Education

Design and Technology: Product Design 5551

PD3D Design and Market Influences

Report on the Examination

2008 examination – June series

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General

This year candidates seem to be a little better prepared than in previous examination series. The theme appears to have been very accessible to candidates and provoked the creation of some very original, innovative designs. A minority of candidates seemed not to have read the additional information printed on the theme paper and failed to produce designs using sustainable materials.

Question 1

This was answered quite well by most candidates with the exception of question b (ii) which very few answered correctly. Generally most candidates gained at least half marks.

- (a) (i) Responses to this question were generally good but at times a little repetitive. Very few candidates mentioned that a brief might be generated by a client or entrepreneur and that it will lead to the creation of a design specification.
- (ii) This was very well answered with some appropriate examples given. Many candidates scored full marks for this part.
- (iii) This was generally well answered although the responses were often repeated for part b (i). The better answers referred to a comparison to the specification, testing for functionality, etc.
- (b) (i) This was well answered with the majority of candidates referring to pre-production testing, presentation of the design to clients, etc.
- (ii) Responses were very poor for this question. Quite a large number of candidates described working drawings being used to show how a product works, the function of moving parts or a type of drawing that is modified as you make a product.

Question 2

- (a) The majority of candidates produced between 4 and 5 design ideas. The quality of these varied considerably. The best examples were detailed with notes explaining sustainable materials, construction methods and innovative features. A few candidates created designs for other items of furniture which were not chairs or stools.
- (b) (i) Quality of communication was not quite as good as previous examinations. In many cases, drawings were well executed but lacked annotation. Some did not communicate manufacturing or assembly details with drawings.
- (ii) Originality and innovation was generally good with a small number being highly creative designs. Common examples were seats created from recycled wheel barrows, baths, or innovative use of materials such as woven seat belts, carrier bags, etc.
- (iii) This was a difficult area for candidates in this series of examinations. Many candidates seemed to forget the requirement for sustainable materials and simply labelled up parts with materials such as aluminium, polypropylene, pine, etc. Whilst these may have slightly better environmental credentials than alternatives, it was not made clear why these could be considered sustainable. Strangely, this year a large number of candidates simply labelled parts with generic terms such as 'wood', 'metal', and 'plastic'. In both cases, marks were not awarded.

- (iv) Methods of construction achieved a mixed response. As in the case for part (iii), candidates sometimes ignored the specification point for one-off or limited batch production and gave descriptions of injection moulding or press forming which are only appropriate for volume production. The best example used two or more annotated sketches showing assembly details of various joints on the furniture.
- (v) Dimensioning was usually very good with many candidates gaining full marks.
- (vi) Details finish was not given a great deal of thought by candidates. It was either ignored or only very minor information was given. Generic terms were used such as 'varnish', 'coloured paint', or simply a statement of "no finish is needed" without further explanation.
- (vii) This part of the question was well handled by the majority of candidates. In most cases, the drawings and annotation clearly addressed the specification. Some candidates also went to the length of explaining how they had met the specification in a discursive paragraph.

Quality of written communication.

This was similar to previous Unit 3 examinations with the average QWC mark being around 3 marks. It was noted that more candidates seem to be writing in phone 'text' language which is clearly not appropriate.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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