



*Let the mind manage the body  
Que l'esprit gère le corps*

**MAURITIUS  
EXAMINATIONS  
SYNDICATE**

**NCE 2023 GRADE 9**

**Technology Studies**

**Component 2: Food & Textiles Studies**

Subject code: N550

***EXAMINER'S REPORT***

March 2024

## **General Comments**

The examiner's report is produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance. It provides useful guidance for future candidates, on how Educators can improve their teaching and on how performance could be improved. The report should be read alongside the question paper. A copy of the question paper can be downloaded from the MES website.

The NCE assessment for the year 2023 was on the full syllabus and the assessment was scheduled in October 2023

The duration of the paper is one hour fifteen minutes and its weighting to the overall assessment in Technology Studies is 50%. The design of the assessment is based on three Assessment Objectives. Approximately 50% of the total marks assess candidates' Knowledge and Understanding (AO1), another 40 % on Application Skills (AO2) and approximately 10 % is for Analysis and Evaluation (AO3).

The paper consists of Section A (24 marks) and Section B (26 marks). The question paper catered for all the ability groups. Most candidates attempted all the questions in the question paper.

A sound knowledge of the syllabus was demonstrated and the majority were able to attempt most questions set.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to meticulously read and comprehend each question or its components. For instance, if a question instructs candidates to 'circle the correct answer,' as illustrated in the question paper, it is imperative that candidates adhere to the instructions diligently. Whenever feasible, candidates should employ technical terms pertinent to the syllabus when addressing questions. Additionally, candidates are advised to skillfully identify key words from the set questions, as this will facilitate their successful completion of the tasks.

Most candidates endeavored to answer all questions, and often the question format facilitated their attainment of marks. Candidates demonstrated proficiency in addressing the questions posed in Section A of the exam paper. Overall, handwriting was neat and easily legible. Additionally, a notable occurrence this year was the prevalence of answers written in Creole.

## **Key messages**

- It is essential that candidates read the questions carefully before writing their response. Educators need to fully prepare candidates by ensuring they have good comprehension of technical words related to Food & Textiles Studies, such as function, purpose, care symbols and hygiene practices, so they are able to understand what is required from questions.
- Candidates need to read and understand the instructions on the cover page.

- The marks allocated to each question or part of a question give an indication of the level of details required from the candidates.
- Though tolerated answers in Creole or French should be discouraged. Students should be given the opportunities to write their answers in English.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **SECTION A**

#### **Question 1 (Multiple choice)**

This question was generally well answered. The majority of candidates attempted all parts of the question. It is important to note that if multiple responses are given by a candidate for an item, and it is not obvious which response they are choosing, a mark cannot be awarded. Candidates should ensure that one response is clearly marked for each multiple-choice question. Candidates should be advised against leaving any multiple-choice questions blank.

#### Item (a)

The item proved to be relatively challenging to candidates. Only about 50% of the candidates were able to identify that '*cereals, fruits and milk*' is a healthy meal. The terms healthy meals were at times confused with healthy dish. Therefore, a lot of students choose '*lettuce salad*' as a healthy meal. Candidates did not understand that a healthy meal is a balanced meal which contain the three important groups of nutrients.

#### Item (b)

This question was successfully answered, with the majority of the candidates correctly identifying 'Grilling' as the method of cooking.

#### Item (c)

This was a well-answered question with approximately 90% of the candidates giving the correct answer 'A gas stove' shown in the figure.

#### Item (d)

Approximately 50% of the candidates correctly recognised the type of line shown in the figure is 'Decorative line'. This question also demonstrates the importance of demonstration and bringing samples in class to show candidates during the teaching of fashion sense.

#### Item (e)

This was a well-answered question with approximately 80% of the candidates able to identify fashion trend shown in the figure.

Item (f)

This question was successfully answered, with the majority of the candidates correctly identifying ‘pull over’ as the item made out of knitted fabric.

### Question 2 (Matching)

The matching exercise was well tackled. Most candidates score maximum marks. The question is based on Nutrition & Health and Principles and Methods of Food Preparation. However, some candidates confused a packed lunch with dessert. The picture of sunlight was also matched with dessert.

### Question 3 (True/False)

The majority of candidates correctly attempted this question and scored either 4 or 5 marks. Candidates followed the instructions given and neatly put a tick in the grid. Very few candidates ticked between the True/False columns and did not gain any mark. Few candidates found items a, b and c challenging.

### Question 4 (fill in the blanks)

Fairly well-answered question. Many grammatical mistakes were noted although the words were given. This was a well-answered question, with approximately 80% of the candidates able to match the correct name with the pictures.

For part (a) picture 3, the expected answer was ‘pressing cloth’ but instead candidates stated steam iron or ironing board. Some candidates also wrote only one word (part of the answer) while two words were given; e.g., ‘pressing’ instead of pressing cloth; or ‘steam’ instead of steam iron.

For part (b) many candidates wrote “embroidery” or “blanket” instead of “loop stitches” and no mark was awarded.

### Question 5 (Fill in the blanks)

This was a well answered question with approximately 80% of the candidates scoring the maximum marks. However, some candidates lost marks on the last part of the question item “d” on strong family relationships. Most candidates provided answer ‘positive’ or ‘communication’ instead of ‘trust’.

## SECTION B

In Section B, candidates were tasked with applying their knowledge and understanding, as well as the analysis and evaluation skills. Candidates responses varied significantly in terms of knowledge and understanding demonstrated. Overall, the questions were clearly worded to elicit responses that were in line with the mark scheme.

### Question 6

#### (a) Food labels

This proved to be a challenging question. A limited number of candidates achieved full marks. This question differentiated effectively, with more able candidates demonstrating the specific knowledge needed to access full marks. Educators are advised to reinforce these concepts with students when they are learning about food labels. The terms ‘Expiry Date’ and ‘Use by’ were confusing for most candidates. They could not differentiate between the two terms.

#### (b) Care symbols

This question received a range of responses from candidates. In general, it was not as well-answered as expected, with candidates failing to identify the care symbols correctly. Candidates wrote only Chlorine instead of Chlorine bleach. Candidates wrote only Iron instead of Iron at high temperature.

It seems that candidates are not familiar with care symbols. More demonstration and hands-on activities are to be encouraged. Educators should expose students more to this type of question through revision exercises.

### Question 7

This question was not well answered because candidates did not appear to understand the term ‘order of steps’. One third of the candidates answered the question correctly and scored full marks for this part. Approximately 10% of the candidates did not attempt this question or scored zero marks. It seems that candidates were not familiar with the practical aspects of textile. Students should be encouraged to do practical sessions that will help them to practice the different types of seams and will therefore be better able to memorise the steps.

### Question 8

This question was well attempted. Only few candidates achieved full marks. Almost 50% scored between two and four marks.

#### (a) Fabric finishes

Most candidates got at least one mark for giving the correct purpose of at least one fabric finish. Candidates had difficulties mainly in answering the first part on brushing finish. Most

candidates correctly explained flame retardant and waterproof finishes. Grammatical mistakes were noted.

(b) Many candidates confused fibres with fabrics for example ‘cotton’, ‘wool’ or ‘silk’ were given as answers for a woven fabric.

(c) Candidates attempted this part satisfactorily. The most common wrong answers were smooth, absorbent, thick, and crease-resistant and stretch.

When preparing for this style of question, candidates are encouraged to practise answering questions that require writing with a clear chain of reasoning.

### Question 9

Most candidates who understood the question were able to get 4 or 5 marks. Repetition of response was limited, showing that the candidates responded to instructions provided as part of the question. Spelling mistakes were quite common.

#### (a) Food choices

The style of this question enabled knowledge of factors influencing food choice to be clearly tested. The question was well-attempted by the candidates, with approximately 50% achieving full marks. Many candidates were quite familiar with the factors which influence our food choices such as the personal and external factors.

Where candidates received fewer marks, some focused on explaining the nutritional needs of the given life stages rather than factors influencing their food choice. This demonstrates misinterpretation of the question.

#### (b) Hygiene practices

The question 9(b) proved to be an accessible question, with good responses from the majority of the candidates. Approximately 50% of the candidates received credit for this question. Where marks were not awarded, it was because candidates wrote lengthy ambiguous answers which did not convey any meaning.

Candidates who listed personal hygiene, food hygiene and kitchen hygiene were awarded marks. Irrelevant answers like “food should be well cooked, eat healthy food, avoid salty and oily foods were also provided by candidates, resulting in loss of marks.

Ensuring students understand the concept of hygiene practices to consider while eating out would be beneficial.

### Question 10

#### (a) Unustainable food production

Many candidates were able to provide correct answers to unsustainable food production practices. The most common answers noted were pollution, deforestation, water shortages, and wastage of resources. Some candidates confused food production with food consumption

and provided answers related to health issues such as food poisoning, diarrhea, dizziness and nausea.

(b) Food preservation

Most candidates were able to correctly identify at least one way of preserving food but few candidates achieved the two marks. The most popular responses were pickling, salting and freezing.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Candidates need to read the instructions properly before attempting the questions. They should try to focus on the key elements of each question. Open-ended questions are a challenge to most candidates and they should practice more such questions. Educators must ensure that the set of objectives of each chapter are met and the content of the chapter are discussed fully in class.

□ Emphasize **Practical Skills:** Encourage Educators to prioritize practical skills development alongside theoretical knowledge. Practical sessions should be structured to allow students ample hands-on experience in food preparation and textile techniques.

□ **Integration of Theory and Practice:** Advocate for an integrated approach that connects theoretical concepts with practical applications. This ensures that students not only understand the underlying principles but also know how to apply them effectively in real-life situations.

□ Promote **Creativity and Innovation:** Encourage Educators to foster creativity and innovation in students' work. Hands-on activities and practicals should provide opportunities for students to explore their creativity, experiment with different materials and techniques, and develop innovative solutions to design and culinary challenges.

□ Incorporate **Contemporary Issues:** Suggest integrating discussions on contemporary issues and trends in the fields of Food and Textiles Studies. This could include topics such as sustainable food practices, ethical sourcing of textiles, and the impact of technology on design and production processes. Providing context on current issues enriches students' understanding and prepares them to navigate the complexities of the modern world.