



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

**Friday 16 June 2023 – Morning**

**A Level in Design and Technology:  
Fashion and Textiles**

**H405/02** Problem Solving in Fashion and Textiles

Resource Booklet

Time allowed: 1 hour 45 minutes



**INSTRUCTIONS**

- Use this Resource Booklet to answer **all** the questions.
- You should spend **35 minutes** reading this Resource Booklet.
- Do **not** send this Resource Booklet for marking. Keep it in the centre or recycle it.

**INFORMATION**

- This document has **8** pages.

**ADVICE**

- Read this Resource Booklet carefully before you start your answers.

The stimulus in this booklet relates to issues and problems that may be encountered by a business responding to market needs and taking new products to market.

## Simple Boutique

A new fashion business called Simple Boutique was established in January 2020. The business was created by Sam who is a textile designer and Alex who is a business graduate. They identified a gap in the market for a simple product range that quickly responded to fashion trends in casual wear.

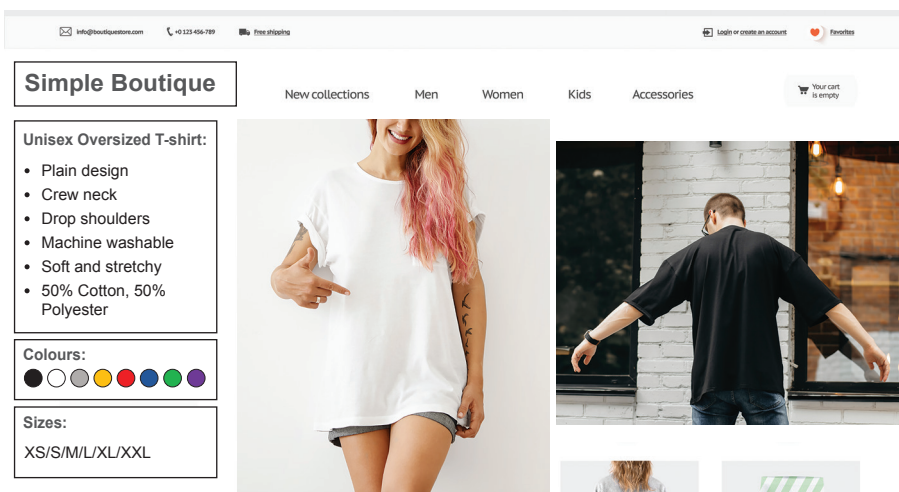
Simple Boutique launched its line of unisex clothing (**Fig. 1**) using a new website that was designed by Alex to attract new customers. Alex wanted to appeal to young people and knew that having a good online presence was the best way to reach them.



**Fig. 1**

## Manufacturing Methods

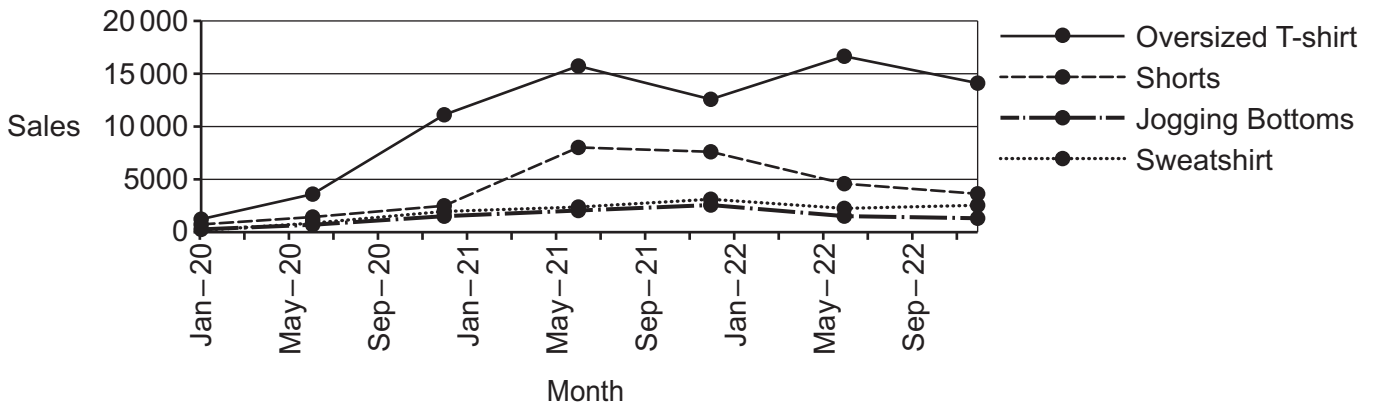
Simple Boutique manufactured the new product range in a rented workspace using sustainable production methods. Sam sourced fabric in popular colours using his previous experience and textile skills and manufactured a limited number of each product. When the first batches were manufactured, Sam and Alex decided to use the website to sell the products. They stuck to small batches of each product and made 25 of each size in a range of colours. These were advertised on the website (**Fig. 2**) and shared on social media.



**Fig. 2**

Following the launch of the new product range, Sam and Alex reviewed sales data every six months and found that the Oversized T-shirt was the best-selling item (**Fig. 3**). The sales of the Oversized T-shirt remained high and the business was frequently selling out most sizes.

### 2 Year Sales Data

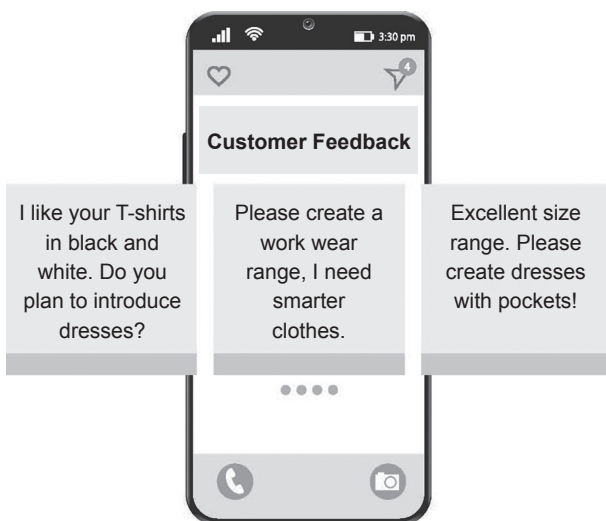


**Fig. 3**

Simple Boutique decided to respond quickly and sourced an overseas manufacturer who was able to supply black and white Oversized T-shirts in a higher volume. The business was therefore able to stock this item in all sizes. This reduced the cost of manufacturer which meant Simple Boutique could use any surplus profit to invest in market research.

### Responding to Customer Feedback

Following the successful launch of the new product range and improved stock levels, Simple Boutique decided that it wanted to get to know its customers better. The business created a survey to help identify further opportunities to expand the product range to better meet the needs of its target market. A feedback form was also introduced and sent out to customers who ordered online. They could access this form through their phone using an email attachment which linked to a mobile version of the website. **Fig. 4** shows examples of customer feedback.



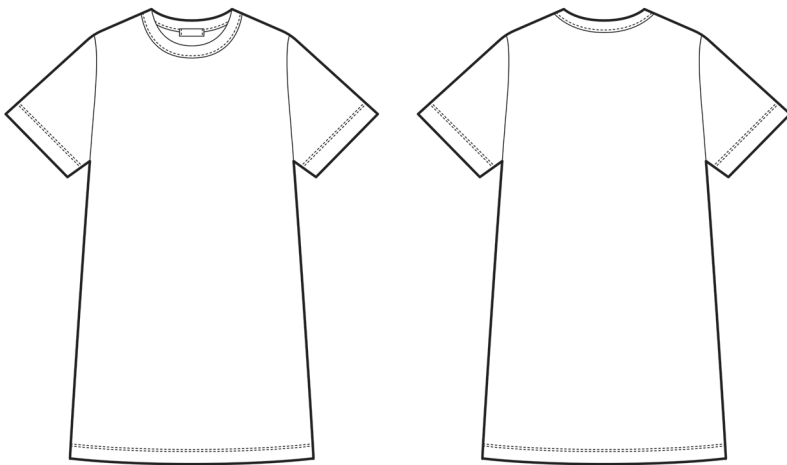
**Fig. 4**




Customer feedback identified the following important considerations:

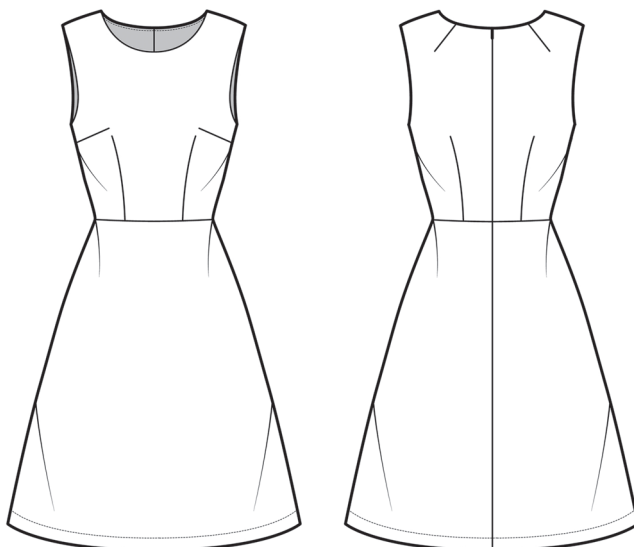
- smarter looking
- work wear
- comfortable to wear
- easy care and washable
- sustainable fabrics.






Having analysed the customer feedback, Simple Boutique selected two designs for a new dress line. The business planned to introduce a limited range of sizes to be manufactured by Sam in the UK. If popular, the size and range would be extended and overseas manufacturing would be considered to ensure a continuous supply.

The following designs (**Fig. 5**) were presented to customers for additional feedback:



<b>Dress A: Short Sleeve Shift Dress Specification</b>	
<b>Fabric</b>	Woven cotton 98% cotton 2% elastane
<b>Style details</b>	A line Crew neck Loose fit Knee length Short sleeve
<b>Sizes</b>	8–18 UK
<b>Aftercare</b>	   Wash in any temperature    Dry in any temperature    Iron in suitable temperature



<b>Dress B: Sleeveless Fitted Dress Specification</b>	
<b>Fabric</b>	Knitted jersey 68% viscose, 27% nylon, 5% elastane
<b>Style details</b>	A line Round neck Fitted waist Knee length Sleeveless
<b>Sizes</b>	8–18 UK
<b>Aftercare</b>	   Wash in mild temperature    Do not machine dry    Do not wring    Steam iron    Line dry

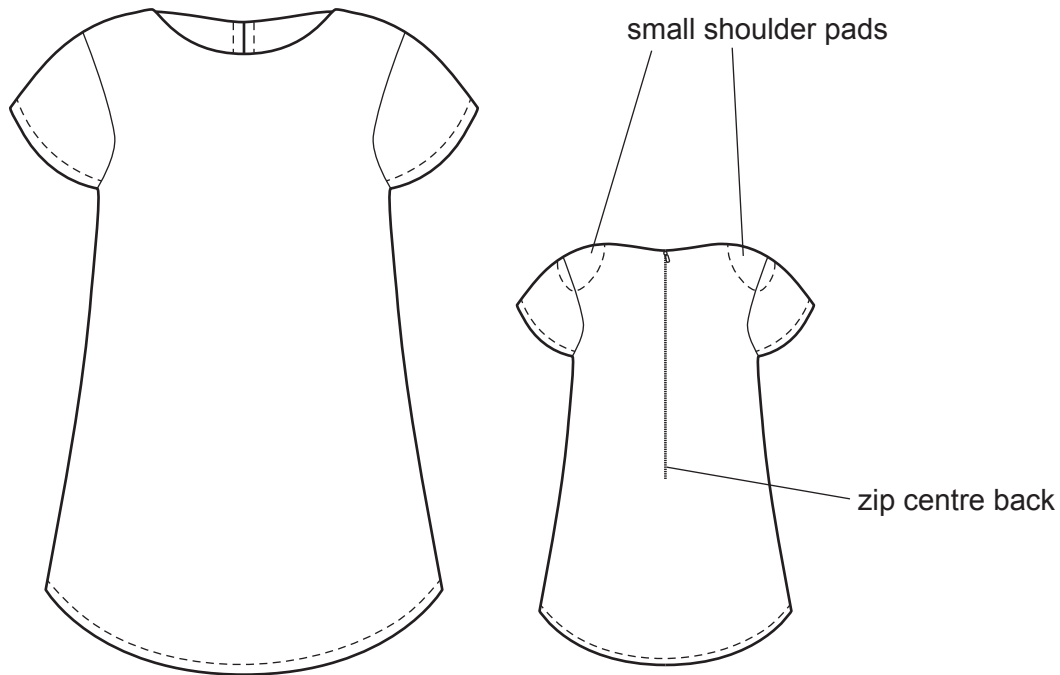
**Fig. 5**




## New Work Wear Dress

The customer feedback was generally positive and it was clear the introduction of a dress would be popular.

Sam reviewed the customer feedback and combined positive features from both dresses to create a new product design.

It was decided to adapt the fit and style slightly so that the dress included a zip fastening and had a slightly fitted shape with shoulder pads to give a more structured silhouette (**Fig. 6**).



<b>Fabric</b>	Woven cotton 98% cotton 2% elastane
<b>Style details</b>	A line Round neck Knee length Cap sleeve
<b>Sizes</b>	8–18 UK
<b>Components</b>	Small foam shoulder pad Black zip
<b>Aftercare</b>	   Wash in any temperature    Dry in any temperature    Iron in suitable temperature

**Fig. 6**

## The Embellishment Trend

The work wear dress has sold well and Simple Boutique has manufactured it in other colours. Sam and Alex also visited fashion shows and identified the trend for embellishment and embroidery (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7

They both feel this is something that could be added to the dress range as new products suited to occasion wear and evening wear (Fig. 8).

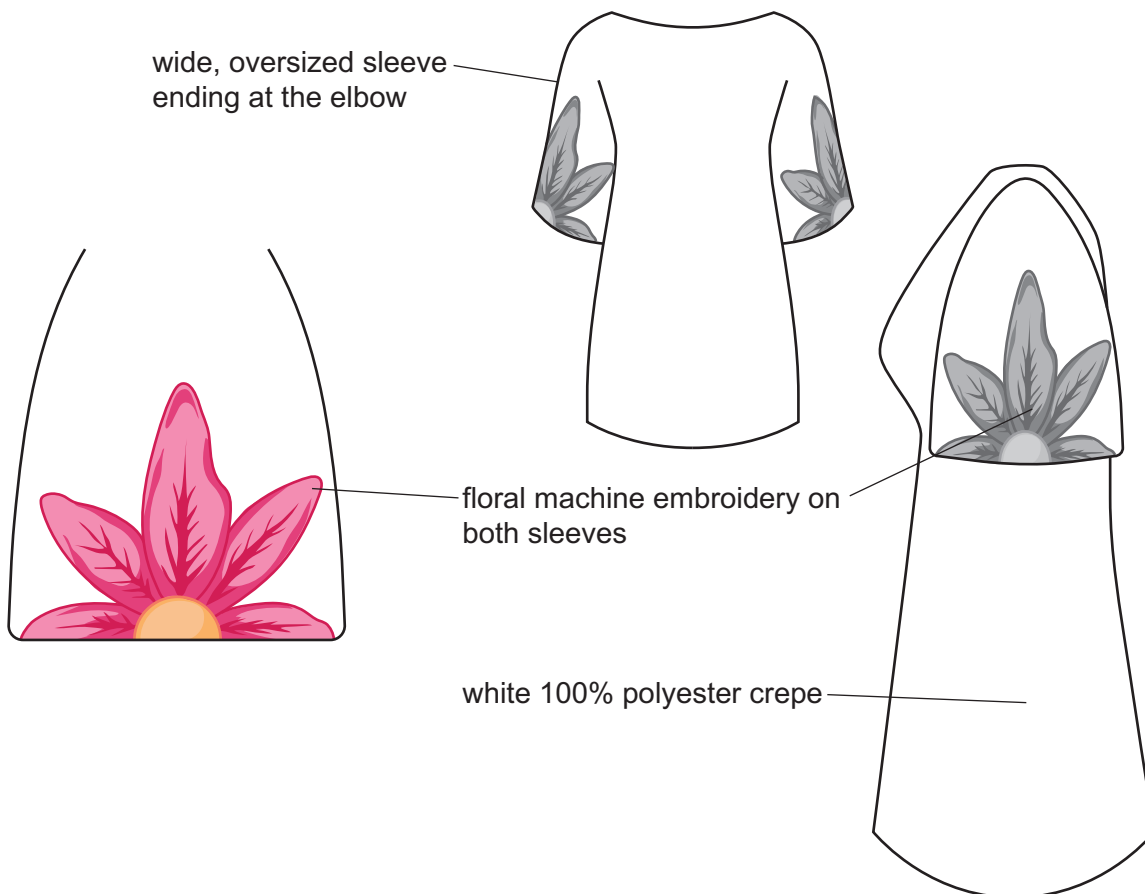
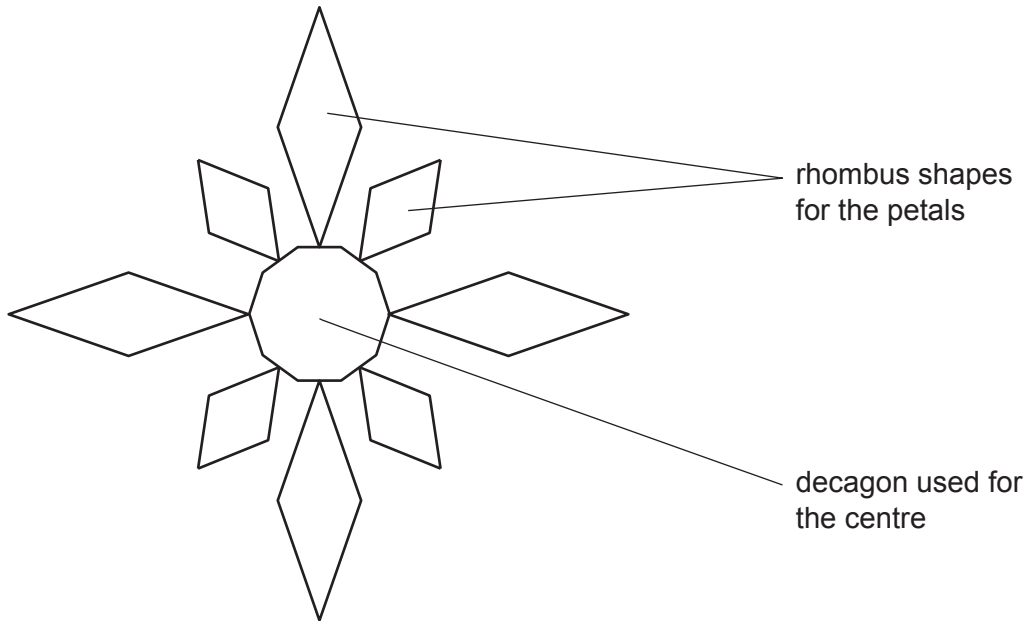


Fig. 8

## Appliqué Embellishment

Simple Boutique has also identified a further niche in the market with the use of appliqué flower designs made from fabric such as cotton that is suitable for Batik wax-resist dyeing. The Batik fabrics will provide a variety of colours, designs and gradual shading that will make the appliqué look more interesting.

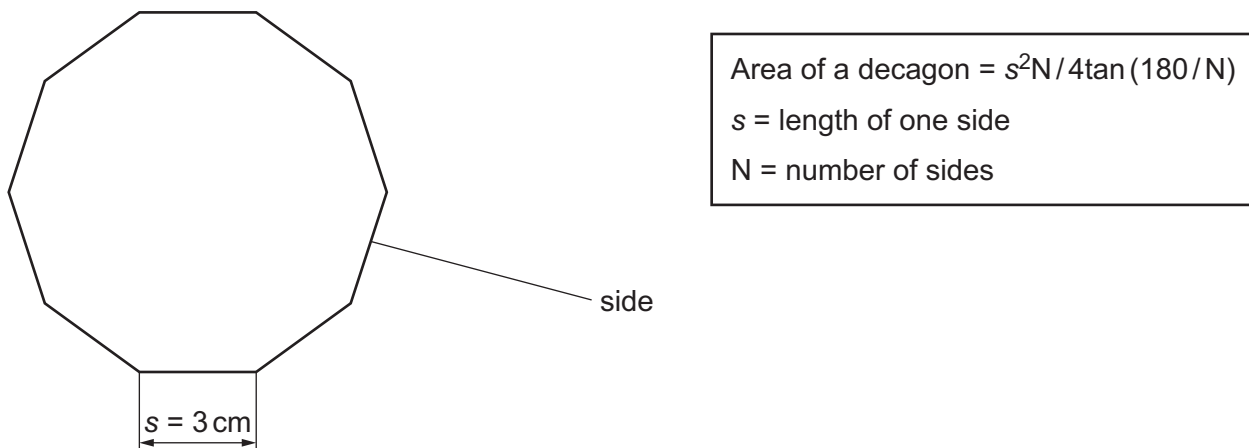
Sam has produced a simple flower design using two different sized rhombus shapes for the petals and a decagon for the centre (**Fig. 9**).



**Fig. 9**

The rhombus shapes will be plotted on 1 cm grid paper to produce the templates for cutting the petals out of the fabric.

The area of a decagon (**Fig. 10**) will also be calculated.



**Fig. 10**  
(not to scale)

## Online Collaboration and Technology



Following the success of the new dress range, Simple Boutique wants to grow the business even further. It is aware of other companies who have successfully collaborated with established brands and designers. Sam and Alex think collaboration is something that would appeal to customers.

Their research shows that many High Street retailers have launched designer collaborations in recent years. This involves a limited range of clothing and accessories being produced in collaboration with a famous fashion designer. The price range is in line with other premium items but the clothing labels include the name of the fashion designer. Customers get the chance to own something by their favourite high-end designers at a fraction of the normal cost.



Simple Boutique decides to use social media and internet searches to find up and coming designers from around the world that they would like to collaborate with. The business plans to expand on its current range of clothing to appeal to a wider customer base and use the website to advertise and sell products. As this will involve different product lines and production processes, Sam and Alex plan to work with overseas manufacturers again. The use of technology and online collaboration will be important when building these new relationships.

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