

GCSE Art & Design Qualification Outline – Consultation Version



Made for Wales.
Ready for the world.

Introduction

This document provides a high-level overview of the proposed WJEC GCSE Art and Design qualification.

It is based on Qualifications Wales's Approval Criteria (key sections are included in Appendix 1). Our qualification **must** meet these requirements.

The qualification outline will provide a guide for the development of the Specification and Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs).

Qualification overview

The GCSE Art and Design qualification will support the Curriculum for Wales by:

- Supporting the statements of what matters¹, giving learners the opportunity to
 - develop artistic skills and knowledge
 - respond and reflect as both artist and audience
 - be innovative and bold in developing their own artistic identity.
- Supporting the principles of progression² by giving learners the opportunity to:
 - make links in the creative process as they explore and innovate
 - create more sophisticated work
 - refine skills and techniques
 - gain confidence and resilience in giving and receiving feedback.
- Supporting the key considerations for Art and Design³ by giving learners the opportunity to:
 - experiment and develop work through a range of resources, materials, techniques and processes
 - produce a range of outcomes and to demonstrate a personal and creative response.

Proposed Qualification Structure

The GCSE Art and Design qualification will be offered via one of the following pathways, which are listed within section 6 of the published Approval Criteria, and which must be included as an endorsement in the qualification title:

- 6.1. art, craft, and design
- 6.2. fine art
- 6.3. graphic communication
- 6.4. textile design
- 6.5. three-dimensional design
- 6.6. photography
- 6.7. critical and contextual studies

¹ <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/expressive-arts/statements-of-what-matters/>

² <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/expressive-arts/principles-of-progression/>

³ <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/expressive-arts/designing-your-curriculum/#discipline-specific-considerations>

It is proposed that the four assessment objectives will be covered equally in each of the units.

Unit 1: Portfolio

60% of qualification

- Work undertaken within the unit will be internally set, marked by centres and moderated by WJEC.

Unit 2: Externally set assignment

40% of qualification

- The externally set assignment will be set by WJEC, marked by centres and moderated by WJEC.

This will be a linear qualification.

Unit Information

Unit 1 - Portfolio

The purpose of this unit is to:

- explore and appreciate the creative work of other people, develop their own creative talents and support investigative curiosity
- develop knowledge, appreciation and understanding of how meaning is communicated
- gain understanding of a range of practices and contexts reflecting their interests and ambitions
- respond to and reflect on work created by other people, applying knowledge of context to evaluate the effectiveness of ideas and techniques used to communicate meaning
- develop creative skills through experimenting and investigating to plan, devise and design images, artefacts and products with purpose and intent, recognising opportunities to realise ambitions
- develop practical and technical skills, communicating artistic intent with purpose and with increasing sophistication and control
- reflect on, refine, and evaluate their own work
- explore the cross-cutting themes of human rights and diversity, including Black, Asian, and minority ethnic perspectives, identity, culture, and contributions.

Unit 1 will comprise a major practical portfolio and outcome/s to be based on internally set themes and subject matter developed from personal and/or given starting points.

- work will be selected and presented for assessment by the learner
- the portfolio must contain evidence of how the learner has met each of the assessment objectives
- the processes of development and refinement of ideas and the recording of / reflection upon those processes will be afforded equal weight to the final pieces of work presented.

There is no prescribed time limit for the completion of work to be included in the portfolio: duration is to be determined by the centre.

Unit 2 – Externally set assignment

The purpose of this unit is to:

- **respond to a chosen brief by carrying out contextual and practical research and supporting studies that inform the resolution of ideas in a period of sustained focus study**

The externally set assignment will consist of two parts:

Part 1: preparatory study period

- externally set assignment materials set by WJEC will consist of assignments framed by an overarching concept or 'big idea' ([see note below](#)), offering visual stimuli and written briefs, which are to be presented to the learner at the start of the preparatory study period
- we propose that the materials will be released to centres prior to the end of the Autumn term (December) in the final year of the course to allow for planning and preparation of support materials
- one of the assignments is to be selected by the learner and used as a starting point from which to elicit a personal, creative response
- responses will be developed and refined during the preparatory study period. They should take the form of practical, critical and contextual preparatory work/supporting studies along with reflections on the process. All of this will inform the resolution of the learner's ideas in the 10 hours sustained focus study.

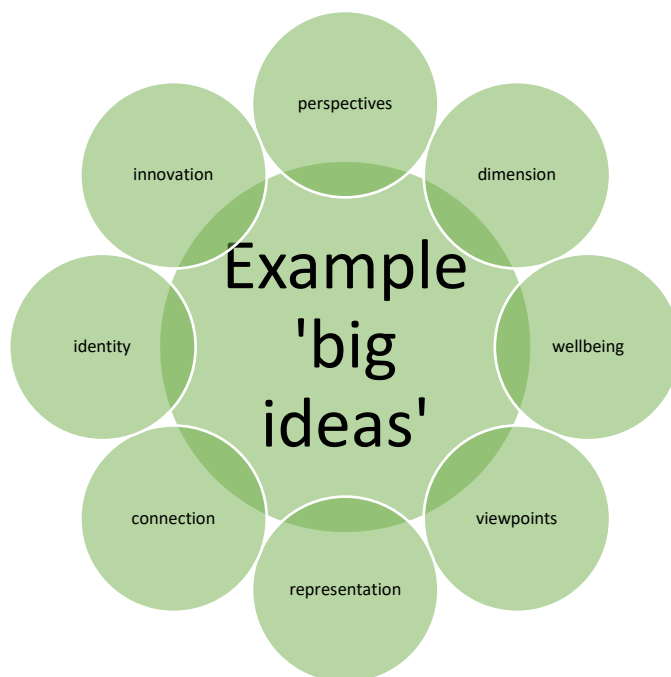
Part 2: 10-hour period of sustained focus work

- the resolution of the learner's ideas from the preparatory work will be completed during the designated 10 hours of sustained focus work, completed under supervised conditions
- work will be selected and presented for assessment by the learner
- the submission must contain evidence of how the learner has met each of the assessment objectives.

Both the preparatory work and sustained focus work will be assessed together using the assessment objectives.

Note

Concepts / big ideas to frame the externally set assignment could include:



The stimuli offered under the umbrella of the conceptual frame will comprise a selection of visual and written briefs.

Consideration of manageability, engagement, reliability and validity

In developing this proposed qualification outline, we have considered manageability, engagement, reliability and validity, and how to balance these considerations in the context of the requirements of the Approval Criteria.

The Approval Criteria require 100% of the qualification to be assessed by non-examination assessment that is marked by the centre and moderated by WJEC. This poses some potential manageability challenges which we propose to minimise by allowing centres to spread the workload and assessment. Work for the portfolio can be compiled throughout the entire period of study, and levels of control for this unit will be low. We propose making the Unit 2 assessment available to centres and learners at the end of the Autumn term in the final year of the course and setting a defined window for completion and submission of the task. Levels of control for this element of the non-examination assessment will be mixed, with lower control for the preparation period, and medium levels of control for the sustained focus work.

We believe the compilation of work for the portfolio will be manageable for learners because it can take place at any point during the course of study and that the compilation of work for the externally set assignment will be manageable for learners because it takes place within a specific and defined period of time. The proposed arrangement should not lead to an increase in workload for teachers compared to the current specification.

We believe that the proposed units will be engaging because of the degree of learner agency offered throughout. There will be flexibility for teachers to select themes and starting

points that are appropriate to the cohort or to individual learners in Unit 1. In Unit 2 there will be flexibility for learners to select the focus of their assignment from a series of visual and written stimuli.

We believe that the non-examination assessment tasks we propose are a valid way of addressing the purpose of the units because they allow learners to demonstrate their skills, creativity and understanding of the subject in a variety of ways and can include different types of work, such as drawings, paintings, sculptures, photographs, digital media, etc. A portfolio of work for assessment for Unit 1 can provide evolving commentary on the process of developing and refining ideas, experimenting with materials and techniques, and reflect the personal interests, strengths and intentions of the learner, as well as their critical and reflective thinking. We consider that this iterative process will minimise the risks inherent in the evolving availability and use of generative AI, as teachers will oversee the development and refinement of the portfolio throughout its compilation. An externally set assessment contextualises research and background study and allows learners to create a personal response to a defined stimulus. We believe that the selected non-examination assessment tasks will achieve assessment of the intended learning outcomes for both units.

To ensure the reliability of the assessment, we will ensure each unit will target the same assessment objective weightings each series, marking criteria will be developed and teachers will be provided with a package of support to ensure consistent application of the marking criteria across centres and over time. We will moderate a sample of candidate work from each centre for each unit to provide further assurance of reliability. Further, the use of externally set assignment materials and supervised conditions for a set time frame will aid reliability for Unit 2.

We will continue to consider the balance of manageability, engagement, reliability and validity, at each stage of qualification development.

Appendix 1

Key information from Approval Criteria

The following information has come directly from Qualifications Wales's [GCSE Art and Design - Approval Criteria](#) - our qualification must meet these requirements.

Purpose

1. **GCSE Art and Design** must:
 - 1.1 be designed primarily for learners between the ages of 14 and 16
 - 1.2 build on the conceptual understanding learners have developed through their learning from ages 3-14
 - 1.3 support teaching and learning by providing appropriately broad, demanding, relevant and engaging content and assessment that relates to and supports the Curriculum for Wales, including its [four purposes](#)
 - 1.4 allow learners to develop a strong foundation of knowledge, skills and understanding which supports progression to post-16 study and prepares them for life, learning and work
 - 1.5 provide meaningful, fair and accurate information on *Learner* achievement within a subject that highlights what learners know, understand and can do

Aims

2. **GCSE Art and Design** must:
 - 2.1. allow learners to explore a range of knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to art and design
 - 2.2. provide opportunities for learners to be assessed in a variety of relevant and meaningful contexts
3. The **GCSE Art and Design** qualification must support learners to:
 - 3.1. explore and appreciate the creative art, design and craft work of other people, develop their own creative talents and support investigative curiosity
 - 3.2. develop knowledge, appreciation and understanding of how meaning is communicated in art, design, and craft
 - 3.3. gain understanding of a range of practices and contexts in art, design, and craft, reflecting their interests and ambitions
 - 3.4. respond to and reflect on the art, design and craft work created by other people, applying knowledge of context to evaluate the effectiveness of ideas and techniques used to communicate meaning
 - 3.5. develop creative skills through experimenting and investigating to plan, devise and design images, artefacts and products with purpose and intent, recognising opportunities to realise ambitions
 - 3.6. develop practical and technical skills, communicating artistic intent with purpose and with increasing sophistication and control
 - 3.7. reflect on, refine, and evaluate their own work
 - 3.8. explore the cross-cutting themes of human rights and diversity, including Black, Asian, and minority ethnic perspectives, identity, culture, and contributions

Assessment Objectives

- The assessment of the knowledge, understanding and skills required in the qualification must target the following assessment objectives in line with the indicated weightings, within a tolerance of +/- 5 percentage points.

AO1	Develop ideas and demonstrate critical and contextual understanding of sources	25%
AO2	Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, techniques, tools, digital technologies, and processes	25%
AO3	Reflect on own work , and record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses	25%
AO4	Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language	25%

Scheme of assessment

- The **GCSE Art and Design** qualification must be linear.
- The **GCSE Art and Design** qualification will not be tiered.

The **GCSE Art and Design** specification must include the following assessment arrangements:

13.1. a total of 100% of the qualification must be assessed through non-examination assessment which must include:

13.1.1 a portfolio worth 60% of the qualification, set by the *Centre*, marked by the *Centre*, and *Moderated* by the awarding body

13.1.2 an assignment worth 40% of the qualification, which must be set by the awarding body, marked by the *Centre*, and moderated by the awarding body

The **GCSE Art and Design** qualification non-examination assessments must, if appropriate to the learners' intentions, be able to be submitted digitally.