



GCSE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCSE
ART & DESIGN**

SUMMER 2019

Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at:
<https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?!=en>

Online Results Analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

ART AND DESIGN

GCSE

Summer 2019

General Comments

Introduction

This Principal report has been written following feedback from our much-valued team of WJEC GCSE Art & Design Moderators and Team Leaders. The team has been privileged to have visited the breadth of WJEC centres nationwide during the 2019 moderation window and has been well placed to provide an insight into current standards and developments, in what is now the second year of assessment as regards the new specification. Colleagues may also wish to peruse the report of our EDUQAS Principal for GCSE Art and Design, Mr David Scott; England based EDUQAS colleagues are delivering the same specification as the WJEC, consequently much of the information provided within the EDUQAS report will be equally valid for Art & Design educators delivering the WJEC model. Interestingly, EDUQAS (our partner organisation) is experiencing a significant increase in centres in England, thus reinforcing the popularity of the new specification and the personable assistance provided by our administration team in Cardiff.

An increasing number of colleagues from Design Technology, Resistant Materials backgrounds have been attending recent Art & Design CPD events, expressing an interest in the 3D focus area of the Art & Design GCSE specification. This is an exciting development and we are looking forward to seeing an increasing number of candidates embracing the 3D element in the future. There are considerable opportunities within 3D to develop a breadth of design and make experiences suited to the various specialisms and interests of different centres. This may include traditional 'Fine Art' style sculptural work and/or 'product design' orientated approaches which may be more familiar to colleagues from a technology background. The key to making this transition is to ensure that the four AOs are explicit within the submissions of candidates and that increased emphasis is placed upon creativity and aesthetics. Colleagues wishing to receive further guidance are advised to contact our subject officer, Mari Bradbury.

This report will place a focus upon addressing the four Assessment Objectives, as opposed to replicating the pattern of previous reports, which have dealt with Portfolio and Externally Set Assignment elements as separate entities. Issues relating to the Assessment Objectives are generally applicable to both the Portfolio and the ESA component; consequently, they will be discussed holistically. Many of the strengths and shortcomings of AO coverage are perennial in nature and are commented upon annually. CPD events and Principal reports strive to target and highlight specific areas requiring attention, but unfortunately some issues still stubbornly persist in undermining the submissions of candidates. Often this is due to candidates not acting upon the advice and direction of their teachers; or regrettably, the fact that staff in some centres are prevented from attending CPD events. Consequently, teachers are often not in receipt of information that could impact positively upon the performance of their candidates. Art and design educators and candidates work within many differing and challenging contexts and it is not the function of this report to be judgemental; it is sincerely hoped that the findings and observations evident in the following text will prove to be of value for art and design educators currently involved in teaching the GCSE Art specification.

Comments on individual questions/sections

AO1

Moderators continue to comment upon seeing exceptional work that has been developed from a strong foundation of contextual study. Visits to locations of aesthetic interest, galleries and/or artist/designer workshops often enable candidates to embark upon their own creative journeys with increased confidence. The most successful Portfolios and ESA responses invariably demonstrate candidates' understanding and appreciation of the work of other artists and designers in ways that feed and nurture their own creative outcomes. These examples are often rigorous in terms of analysis and clearly show how the study of contextual sources has aided the candidates in creating work that has been significantly enhanced due to the considered study of works by artists, craftspeople or designers.

Nevertheless, it is critically important that candidates steer clear of creating outcomes that are too derivative of the work of others and that they demonstrate judgement in terms of applying elements of what they have learnt to their own art, craft or design work. Ultimately, moderators wish to see original work that has been influenced in a meaningful manner by the study of contextual sources; careful teacher planning and direction elicit the most successful results in this regard, particularly at the onset of the Portfolio element. Whilst a reasonable range of contextual sources is to be encouraged, this should not be at the expense of focused and relatively in-depth quality of analysis.

A 'confetti' approach to selecting contextual sources should be avoided as this rarely results in studies which influence candidates' work in ways that are truly relevant and useful. It is unfortunately very common for moderators to see contextual references which have very spurious connections with the practical work of candidates; likewise, it is expected that candidates across the range of ability strive to offer an element of rigour in relation to written annotation. Too often, candidates miss out on the opportunity to gain valuable marks by neglecting to provide enough written analysis of their contextual sources. The examination boards fought hard at the onset of the new specification to avoid the imposition of a formal written examination; however, the trade-off demands a more visible level of written engagement in comparison with previous specifications.

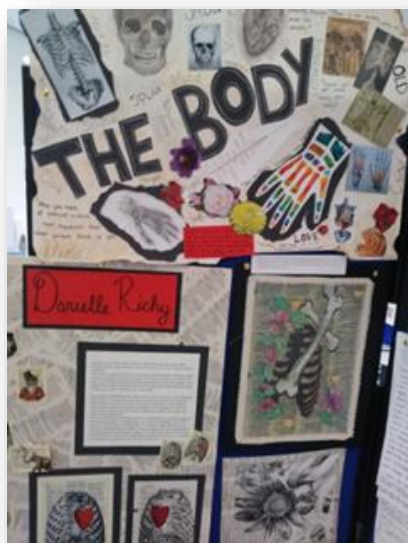
AO2

Admirable work is being created within centres nationally by candidates working across the spectrum of educational establishments and contexts. Indeed, it is evident that inspirational and well-structured teaching often manages to overcome the disadvantages of under-resourcing and limited contact time; colleagues often discover innovative ways (such as accessing recycled materials, alternative sources of funding, etc.) to ensure that their candidates are in receipt of a reasonable breadth of creative materials. Indeed, moderators comment that some of the most inspiring work is often seen within centres challenged by underfunding and deprivation.

Generally, most centres ensure that candidates experience a sufficient range of materials within the differing areas of specialisation and it is relatively rare to see submissions that are limited to an unacceptably narrow range of creative media. The most successful submissions demonstrate a pleasing confidence in the handling and control of techniques and materials, and this is often achieved through ensuring that candidates are in receipt of well-structured foundation courses at the onset of the programme of study. A well planned and delivered foundation period often extending to the spring term of the first year of GCSE study, is now well established within most centres. This helps to ensure that candidates are provided with the necessary time to refine their skills and experiences prior to embarking upon more personal and independent lines of enquiry within the body of the Portfolio. Previous Principal reports comment upon aspiring to achieve the necessary balance

between offering candidates a reasonable breadth of techniques & media whilst avoiding the pitfalls of a 'technique a day' approach. Candidates obviously require adequate time to become conversant with new materials and to refine their technical handling of the media.

It is clear from moderator feedback that most centres are managing to ensure a gratifying level of experimentation of materials and techniques. However, it is the lack of sustained design development that is continuing to undermine candidates' achievement within Assessment Objective 2. This is being commented upon annually within CPD events and Principal's Reports yet persists as being the most common shortcoming within the submissions of candidates nationally. Centres are advised to prioritise this aspect as the primary focus for departmental development going forward. Candidates need to show a visible journey of idea/design development leading from the initial body of research work towards the completed outcome or outcomes. Ideally, this would include annotated sketches, drawings and/or edited images demonstrating for example, compositional considerations followed by further refinement of materials, techniques etc. in pursuit of an enhanced outcome. This approach of course would vary depending upon the area of specialism embraced, however it is essential that a clear path of design development is made explicit to the moderator in order that candidates do not lose valuable marks within this assessment objective.





Ysgol Nantgwyn – Art, Crat and Design - Portfolio

In this submission a range of drawing techniques was used as inspiration to create personal responses combining different textile processes. The Portfolio is highly imaginative and culminates in an exciting final piece which amalgamates drawing and textile process. The work is annotated in detail and shows a clear process of experimentation and development.

Whilst a lack of design development is a major issue within both the Portfolio and ESA components, it is often the ESA submission which suffers most from this shortcoming. Too often, moderators comment upon witnessing a promising level of contextual and research work with little indication of this being developed in a sustained manner towards the outcome. The outcome undertaken within the 10-hour controlled period is often arrived at with little evidence of developmental work and this inevitably results in candidates losing marks. Without doubt, one of the major reasons for this omission is that the candidates simply run out of time during the characteristically pressurised period of the spring term. Centres are advised to offer candidates an in-house timetable of deadlines for the completion of different aspects of the supporting work, thus ensuring that Assessment Objective are adequately embraced between the receipt of the Assignment paper and the commencement of the controlled period.

AO3

Marks for Assessment Objective 3 are also lost by candidates who do not place adequate emphasis upon the design journey; drawing and annotated commentary that demonstrate critical reflection and evaluation as the work progresses, go hand in hand with the process of design development and media experimentation in AO2. Centres are strongly advised to ensure that candidates place enough emphasis upon reflecting upon the development of their ideas in order to demonstrate their understanding and meaning to the moderator. Indeed, design development impacts significantly upon AO2, AO3 and AO4. Consequently, centres have much to gain by ensuring that candidates become confident in clearly highlighting the design journey within their submissions.

Researching and recording ideas is generally the strongest feature undertaken within this assessment objective and the element most comprehensively embraced by candidates nationally. Most centres are comfortable in directing their learners to research and gather a wealth of visual material in pursuit of references and ideas to feed their areas of focus. Recording through the use of drawing and photography provides the basis for candidates to gather the references needed to progress with their creative work; it must be reinforced at this point that drawing should be relevant to the focus area being studied and may take on many differing forms and be undertaken within a breadth of differing materials from charcoal to embroidering marks with a sewing machine.



Drawing with a sewing machine – Ysgol Bro Teifi

The thoughtful use of sketchbooks, visual diaries and/or digital portfolios enables candidates to be rewarded within this assessment objective and should be encouraged as methods of collating and editing information.

Centres who offer their candidates an 'umbrella' theme with regard to the Portfolio often take their candidates to locations of aesthetic interest in order to gather primary sources relating to the chosen theme. Candidates then progress to develop their own original avenues of study from these references, confident in the knowledge that the source of their study has been appropriately vetted and endorsed by the centre. The approach of negotiating a suitable theme with individual candidates is also successful in facilitating the gathering of appropriate primary sources and helps to encourage a pleasing level of personal interest and sustained engagement with the work.

Whilst the judicious use of second-hand sources is acceptable in some contexts, this should not be at the expense of encouraging candidates to generate their ideas from first-hand references. The ill-considered use of second-hand sources invariably undermines the achievement of candidates as they are generally not the most suitable starting points for the creation of original art or design work. If second-hand sources are used, they should be employed thoughtfully, with caution and in tandem with plentiful evidence of first-hand sources. Without doubt, primary sources elicit the most original and inspiring work and will enable the candidate to aspire for a significantly enhanced level of marks.

AO4

WJEC has encouraged centres to present the work of candidates in formats of their own choosing; this may be through sketchbooks accompanied by outcomes, mounted sheets, digital portfolios, or an integrated combination of the above. Whichever approach is adopted it is essential that the four assessment objectives are clearly visible and that candidates undertake work that is highly personal in nature and not overly directed by the centre.

Previous reports have commented upon the practice within some centres of over prescribing the work undertaken by their candidates to the extent that moderators often find it problematical to distinguish between the work of individuals in a sample. This practice is regrettable as it prevents all candidates from producing truly personal outcomes and inhibits the ability of higher achieving candidates to flourish. It also impacts negatively upon the marks which may be awarded within AO4 as the requirement for the work to be 'personal' is clearly stated within the assessment objective. Candidates who have been in receipt of well-planned and delivered foundation courses are best able to meet the challenge of producing work of a personal nature within the Portfolio and responding confidently to the questions posed within the ESA paper.

Assessment Objective 4 seeks to reward candidates' ability to present a coherent and meaningful submission of work that features an outcome (or outcomes) that have been arrived at through engaging in the process of research, contextual study, experimentation, reflection and creative making. A common feature of centre marking is to see good quality outcomes over rewarded despite a lack of supporting work. A paucity of evidence in terms of research, experimentation, contextual references etc. will inevitably undermine performance within AO4, regardless of the quality of outcome. This assessment objective places emphasis upon assessing the success of the submission in its entirety and does not focus exclusively upon the outcome/s. A judgement needs to be made with regards to which extent the submission is 'imaginative, personal and meaningful' and to what degree it shows an 'understanding of visual language' and conveys the 'purpose and intention of the work'. This therefore necessitates the submission to be assessed holistically and not only based on the success or otherwise of the outcome/s.



Ysgol Henry Richard- Textiles- 2019

A Textile Design Portfolio submission demonstrating a pleasing level of rigour across the four assessment objectives. This is a Portfolio approach featuring mounted sheets, sketch books and visual diaries.

CONCLUSION

Regrettably, a significant number of centres are overmarking their candidates' work, particularly as regards AO2, AO3 and AO4. A successful moderation takes place when the centre marks reflect national standards. Accurate centre marking is a critical requirement if the upset of scaling is to be avoided and colleagues are respectfully encouraged to ensure that they are fully conversant with contemporary standards relating to the new specification. It is obviously essential that art and design educators charged with the responsibility of teaching candidates the GCSE specification, are clear as regards what marks should be awarded to candidates across the range of attainment. CPD events and a breadth of information on the Lightbox and WJEC websites (e.g. Assessment Videos, Benchmark work, Marked Exemplar materials), provide copious opportunities for staff to familiarise themselves with national standards and the process of assessing GCSE work accurately. The assessment tools relating to the new specification have been designed to help ensure greater clarity in terms of assessing the work of candidates, consequently it is disappointing that some centres still seem uncertain as to what is required in a submission to warrant specific marks. It goes without saying that marks awarded must only relate to performance within the four assessment objectives; centres are obliged to highlight this judgement in the individual AO mark breakdown for each candidate. 'Hunch' marking based merely upon ill-considered gut reaction as opposed to a considered appraisal of the work in relation to Assessment Objectives will invariably result in significant inaccuracies when the sample is scrutinised by the visiting moderator. Understandably, centres are under considerable

pressure to ensure that their candidates achieve successful grades. However, this cannot be at the expense of adhering to nationally agreed standards.

Colleagues nationally are very appreciative of the fact that WJEC offers verbal feedback to centres following the moderation process. Whilst this dialogue will seek to highlight the manner in which elements of the assessment objectives have been successfully undertaken and to provide an indication of areas for further development, it cannot be used as an opportunity to attempt to gain information relating to the moderator's marks. Centres are to be reminded that moderators are not permitted to discuss the marks awarded to candidates under any circumstances. The revised moderator report format for 2019 will provide centres with a comprehensive account of the accuracy of centre marking and areas of strength and further development; this will be made available on the WJEC secure website following the publication of results.

I would wish to conclude by reminding centres of the forthcoming Autumn CPD events that will seek to provide further guidance relating to the assessment of GCSE work in addition to elaborating upon other issues of relevance to the GCSE specification. The WJEC website offers a wealth of information relating to teaching/assessing Art & Design GCSE and colleagues are well advised to visit this platform in order to aid future planning at departmental level.

I wish you a rewarding and successful new academic year and would encourage centres who require further guidance to contact our knowledgeable and helpful team of officers at WJEC.

Summary of key points

- Candidates need to ensure that the journey of design/idea development is fully explicit within Portfolio and ESA submissions.
- Ensure sufficient rigour in relation to analysing contextual sources.
- Place significant emphasis upon using primary as opposed to secondary sources in order to elicit truly personal and original responses.
- Aim to complete coherent, well integrated submissions which address all four Assessment Objectives equally.
- Centres are strongly advised to become fully conversant with national standards in relation to internal marking; CPD events, exemplar material on the WJEC website and a focus upon using the diagnostic assessment tools whilst marking should facilitate this.



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