EXAMINERS' REPORTS

LEVEL 3 FOUNDATION DIPLOMA IN ART AND DESIGN

SUMMER 2018

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

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Foundation Diploma in Art & Design

Level 3 Diploma

Summer 2018

OVERVIEW

Centres seamlessly delivered the new WJEC Foundation Art and Design (FAD) specification, for first teaching from September 2017. The improvements and amendments provided the course leaders and teams with the guidance to produce excellent courses and outstanding results.

Two centres in England delivered the course for the first time bringing our English based centres up to six in number.

There remains a continued threat from some HE institutions taking students directly from A Level courses. This is despite the figures that indicate the retention rate for such degree courses is far lower than those that have recruited FAD students. Many of the most prestigious HE institutions, however, insist on their degree intake being recruited from FAD students.

Progression from FAD to degree courses in Architecture and Ceramics continues to increase and it is pleasing to note that the higher intellectual process necessary to successfully complete the FAD course is becoming more widely recognised by several stakeholders.

All centres cover the main disciplines of art and design well, and printmaking, in all its forms, is becoming more prevalent on many courses. Painting has also shown an increase in practise echoing what one national art critic recently described as an avant-garde revival.



Distinction work of a Coleg Sir Gar Fashion student who is progressing to the prestigious Womenswear undergraduate course at CSM this year.

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New Specification

The new WJEC Specification is continuing its popularity and reputation throughout Wales and, increasingly, England. There are four main reasons:

- There is rigour within the specification, but without the unnecessary bureaucracy inherent in some other awarding bodies' specifications.
- The accessibility of WJEC art and design subject specialists and administration professionals to answer course leaders' queries.
- The specification is flexible enough to allow course teams to design and deliver individual courses that are diagnostic, developmental and true to the ethos of FAD.
- 'Performance Points' being allocated in English centres is less of an issue as anticipated, with the age profile of most FAD students taking them out of this funding stream.



Three Dimensional Design – Cardiff Arts Academy

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Moderator Conference and Training Day

The proposed Conference at Gower College was cancelled due to staff illness delaying the final exhibition, resulting in the 2018 Moderator Conference and Training Day being held at Cardiff Arts Academy (CAA) for the second consecutive year. WJEC are indebted to Lou Thornton and her team for re-arranging the proposed moderation day to accommodate this conference. The large course at CAA provided opportunities for moderators to view a comprehensive selection of work and to accurately 'blind' mark the standardised samples using the now familiar criteria sheets.

David Hooper, Moderator since 2002, former Principal Moderator and latterly Chair of the Board of Studies, has retired from moderation duties. David worked tirelessly for FAD, championing the course throughout Wales and England and the WJEC Art and Design Subject Officer, Principal Moderator, Moderation team and everyone concerned with the WJEC FAD programme wish him well.



Fine Art – Cardiff Arts Academy

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Foundation Awards

Although the FADEX exhibition is a most wonderful event the present lack of funding to stage the exhibition means that it will not be held in 2019.

It has been suggested by the Art & Design Subject Officer that a WJEC 'Award for Excellence' be given to an outstanding student at each centre. The award, probably recognised in the form of a certificate and prize, would be introduced in 2019. It would be possible to publish, online, the names and work of the award winners for each year. The idea will be discussed at the 2018 Board of Studies in October.

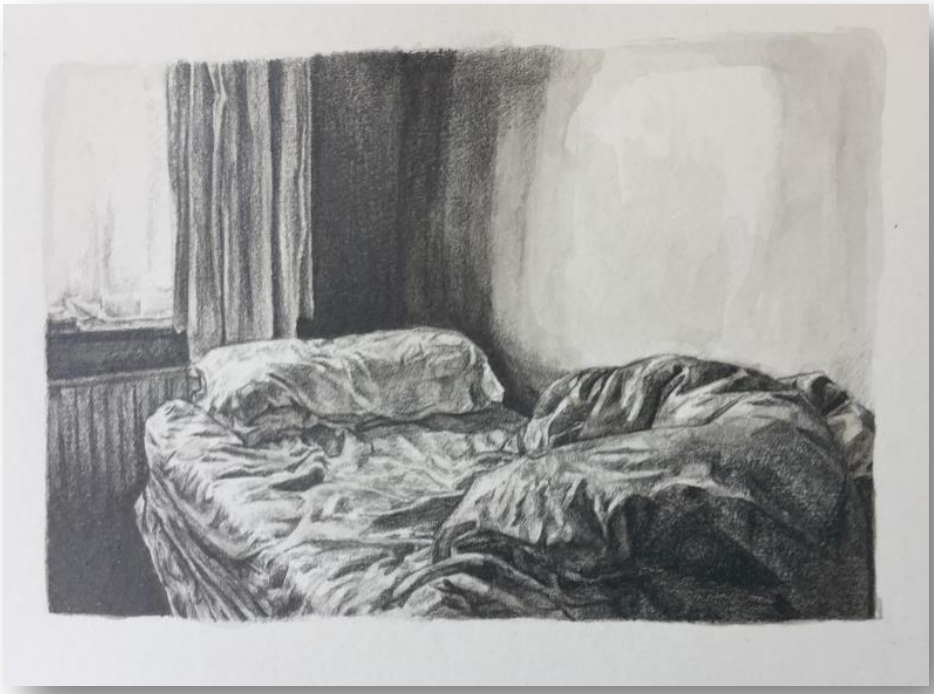
Administration

The electronic grade assessment input continues to improve and has been accepted by course teams as an important aid in the moderation process.

The vast majority of centres were able to have all grades submitted and printed out ready for moderation and there were far fewer variations in the print-out required.

All teams keep excellent records of assessment throughout the three stages of the course. Some centres use a grade system for stages 1 and 2, although this is not a requirement of the WJEC specification. Possibly as a result of the thorough assessment process, including the student understanding of the process, there were fewer referrals appearing in the final units.

As a result of the assessment criteria sheets and WJEC guidance, course teams are providing consistently accurate and fair assessment. The sheets also allow for borderline cases to be identified and discussed in detail by moderators and course teams, based on short comments made against an individual criterion.



Fine Art – Cardiff Arts Academy

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There were some good examples of printed Student Course Handbooks with helpful illustrations and comments. This is a good aid to teaching and to the overall delivery of the course. It must be remembered that FAD courses (although mostly delivered in the FE environment) are in a position of welcoming students to the Higher Education culture. They compare themselves to former peers who have progressed to University degree courses in other subjects. It should be noted that all FAD courses must have a customised course handbook. This need not be a printed document but can be produced digitally for on screen use. Details of the contents required are contained in the course specification.

Pastoral care has been time consuming for staff on several courses. All centres provide excellent pastoral care for students, but it seems that FAD, being outside the normal FE cohort, can sometimes struggle to gain the support of centre based experts to alleviate the care issue. Course leaders affected are to be congratulated on raising the issue with managers and hopefully the new intake in September will see the benefit of this intervention.



Illustration – Cardiff Arts Academy

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Other

The recognition that FAD students are equivalent to first year degree students, in other subjects, is important in helping in the process of assimilation to the course. Some centres are pro-active in arranging induction days where students are welcomed to the higher education experience that is FAD. This 'welcome' is to be applauded and encouraged and the BOS will discuss ways in which students are inducted and introduced to the FAD and HE experience.

Again this year, students took part in several 'extra curricula' activities with local projects related to art and design events. Course teams can feel proud of the involvement of their FAD students in a wide variety of experiences that will benefit them in future. This benefit is not only artistic, but involves organisation, communication, team work, financial skills and business acumen. This ticks a lot of boxes in a student's development, inherent in, but without being a formal part of, the WJEC specification.

It is important that the WJEC, and all centres delivering FAD, are united in their promotion of the FAD philosophy. Intellectually, the typical FAD student is at the higher end of the achievement spectrum. They also possess the ability, encouraged and developed by FAD, to think creatively and to process thoughts and ideas in an original way. This separates them from the 'rote learning' cohorts and provides the country with a unique resource. WJEC actively supports this idea of creative, thoughtful, problem solving and with the committed FAD course teams sees a bright future for creativity in Wales and England.

Conclusion

Another very successful year can be attributed to the professionalism of the scheme's course leaders and their teams of academic and support staff. Students have responded magnificently to the dedicated teaching and the facilities related to FAD. It is pleasing to note, yet again, that small cohort courses are producing high distinctions to match the best of the large intake centres. Marketing of these currently small cohorts will help them grow so that more locally based students can take advantage of the outstanding WJEC FAD experience.

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