Principal Moderator's Report

LEVEL 3 FOUNDATION DIPLOMA IN ART AND DESIGN

SUMMER 2019

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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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General Comments

Overview

Recruitment and provision

Another successful year in terms of student achievement has been augmented by a further College in England being approved as a centre for the delivery of Foundation starting in September 2019. Hugh Baird College in Liverpool becomes the seventh English Centre in the WJEC Foundation portfolio.

It is pleasing to see the growth of centres in England, but this is counter-balanced by the threat to the very successful Foundation provision based in the capital of Wales. At the time of writing it is uncertain whether the Cardiff Arts Academy course, based in Cardiff city centre and managed by Bridgend College, will run in the next academic year. It is hoped that the rumoured transfer of provision of the programme from Bridgend College to Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC) will take place for the benefit of the very many students who wish to gain entry to this prestigious course.



Carmarthen College – Fashion Textiles

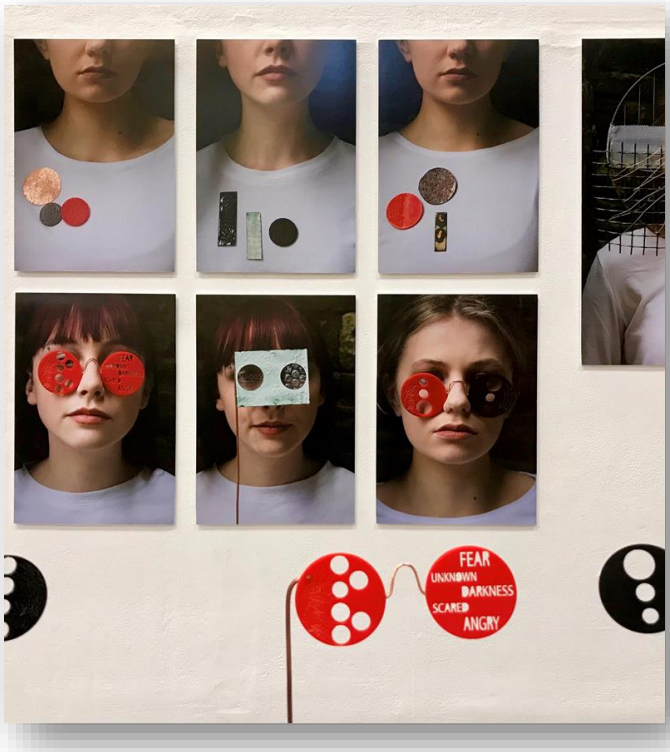
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Progression

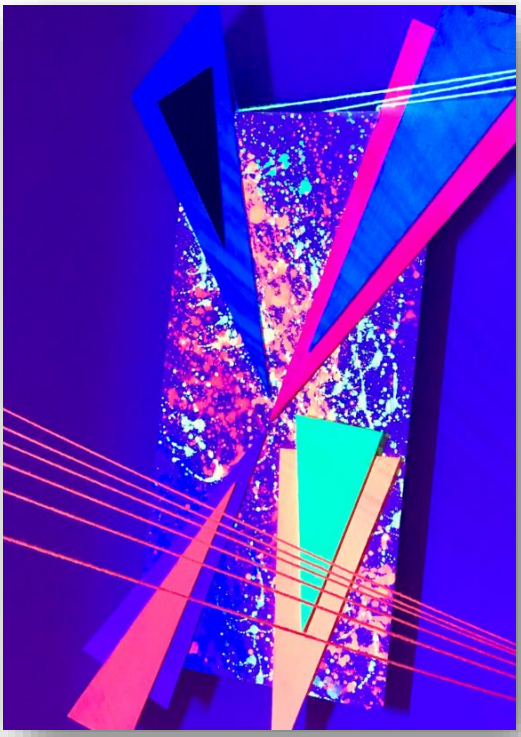
Progression from WJEC Foundation to degree courses in all disciplines of art and design, including architecture, continues to be exceptional, with many students gaining places in the top undergraduate courses in the UK. There is also an increase in the number of students who are progressing to apprenticeships and other work-based activities. Conversations with members of the moderating team have revealed that his year's cohort of students are enthusiastic in their support for Foundation and of the knowledge, skills and articulation it has given them to progress their careers. Although the main beneficiaries, ultimately, of successful Foundation students are the Creative Industries in the UK, it is becoming more widely recognised that Foundation prepares students, by way of greater problem-solving skills and higher confidence levels, for significant input to other sectors of the economy and to higher level study in fields other than Art and Design.

Development

This year saw increased use of technology in all specialisms. There were excellent examples of film, animation and moving image which utilised the latest technology and methods of communication, including social media. This was not subject specific, with architecture, fine art, fashion, 3d design and graphics providing hi-tech solutions to project briefs. However, it is good to see that experimentation and development of the two fundamentals, drawing and colour, still underpin student work and thought processes.



Carmarthen College – Graphic Design



Ashton College – Fine Art

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Moderator Conference and Training Day

This year, Priestley College in Warrington hosted the Moderator Conference and Training Day. This is the first time that the Conference has been held outside Wales since the inception of the WJEC Scheme over 20 years ago. The welcome received by the moderating team was second to none with the Priestley College Foundation Course Leader, Steven Lane ensuring outstanding facilities and organisation of the day. This included a visit by the College Principal, Mathew Grant, and his senior management team. It was very encouraging to hear the Principal expound the importance of Foundation for facilitating the best choice of progression for each student and the subsequent benefits to the UK economy. This is echoed by the statistics from UCAS showing greater retention rates on degree courses for Foundation students when compared with other Art and Design degree entry routes.

The course at Priestley College provided the opportunity for moderators to view a comprehensive selection of work, with excellent examples of all grading decisions. These were moderated by the Principal Moderator and standardised with the locum tenens Art and Design Subject Officer, Rob Griffin. In addition to the assessment training exercise moderators were able to discuss all matters related to the delivery and provision of Foundation across all WJEC centres.

Our sincere thanks to the College Principal, Foundation Course Leader and all concerned at Priestley College for making the moderation, standardisation and conference such a success.

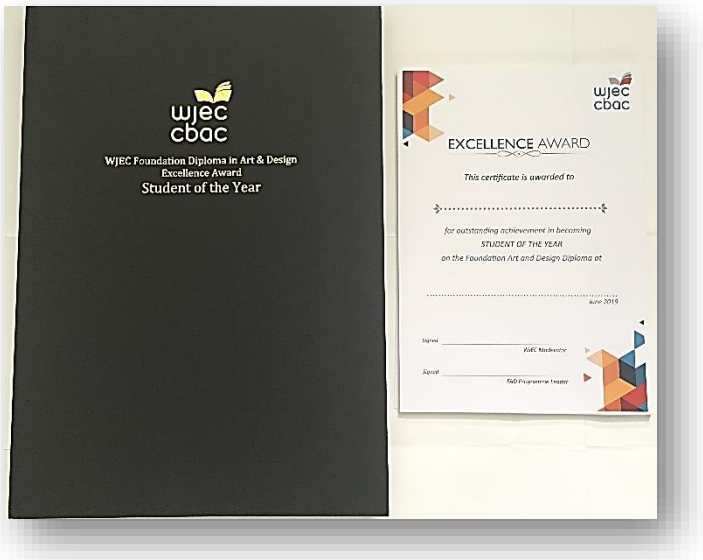


Carmarthen College – Fine Art

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Foundation Awards

This year saw the first presentation of a Certificate and A3 Sketchbook for the WJEC 'Foundation Award for Excellence'. The sketchbook, sponsored by Seawhite, comprising a hard cover case-bound book with gold stamped front cover, was received with delight by the winning students at each centre in the WJEC FAD scheme. Each centre delivering FAD proposed one or more students as possible recipients and the WJEC moderator helped to judge the winning student. Where possible, moderators were involved in the presentations of the awards and prizes. Both staff and the winning students were suitably rewarded for outstanding effort and the awards were deemed a great success in this inaugural year. Work from these students and others with excellent final projects will be showcased on the WJEC Lightbox web resource and Facebook pages.



With thanks to Seawhite for kind sponsorship of the 2019 WJEC Foundation Student of the Year Prize.





Cardiff Arts Academy – Ceramics

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Assessment

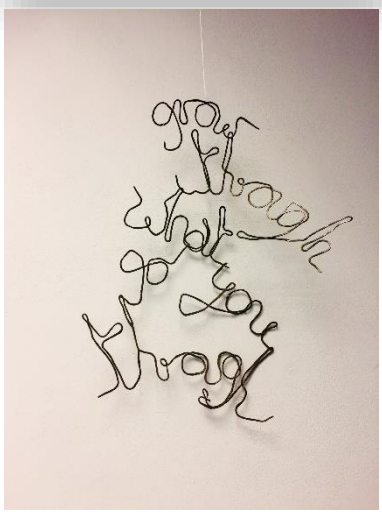
The assessment decisions of the staff on Foundation courses across the scheme were of a very high standard. Moderators are impressed by the thought processes and discussions that take place within every course team and are mindful to respect the work that results in assessment grades. The advantage that moderators have, and which they bring to the moderation process, is that they have a view of work nationally and have been exposed to the standardisation procedures at the annual conference and training day. They are thus able to advise centre staff on the assessment decisions compared to others in the WJEC scheme. This rigorous process ensures fair and accurate grade decisions throughout centres delivering the qualification.

There was discussion at several centres regarding the pro-forma Unit 6 assessment grading criteria sheet. The act of recording comments against certain criteria is an essential aid to moderators, although over-commenting is often detrimental to perceiving the reasoning behind satisfying criteria requirements. There was also mention that the physical space allowed for comment was too small. Some centres have devised their own ‘crib-sheet’ that records all comments made by staff when assessing achievement against the criteria. There is then a condensed comment made on the pro-forma against relevant criteria. This very useful idea will be discussed in detail at the Board of Studies (BOS) meeting in October.













Cardiff Arts Academy – Graphic Design and 3D Design

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Administration

There were fewer issues with the input of assessed grades for Unit 5 and Unit 6 this year. Course leaders had access to the secure WJEC site via their own username and password. Regrettably, there was an issue in one centre where internal systems did not allow course leader access. This problem will hopefully be resolved for future visits.

There is continual improvement regarding records of assessment. Course teams have recorded assessment procedures with diligence and efficiency, including individual and group staff-critiques and assessments. Students throughout the scheme expressed an understanding of the WJEC assessment criteria and the process and timetabling of this assessment.
There was increased evidence of student acknowledgement of their Stage 1 and 2 assessments, with hard copy or digital signatures provided. Again, this year, there was a decrease in the number of referrals at Unit 6 – an indicator of the rigour of staff input, their record keeping and students' understanding of the process.

Increased pastoral care provided by specialist staff; in response to initial identification by Foundation teaching teams; has been a welcome support to the student experience and released teaching time for FAD lecturers on several courses.



Cardiff Arts Academy – Fashion Textiles

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Approaches

Many courses provided visits to events that were focused on helping students make the right choice for further study and career development. There was also a significant input from self-generated functions with one centre creating their own ‘Creative Futures Day’. This was an excellent idea and covered, as well as subject specific talks and information, issues such as:

- Progression to art and design degrees
- How galleries operate
- Global Branding & Communication.

Another centre this year stated in UCAS application forms that students were not available for interviews during January and February with the intention of delaying the early interviews that many students experience. It will be interesting to discuss, at the annual Board of Studies (BOS) meeting this October, the consequence (if any) on the outcome of student applications and the reaction, (if known), of the receiving institutions.

There were several student visits to European cities in 2018-19 including Lisbon, Prague, Amsterdam, Rome and Berlin. We will have to wait to see how (if) Brexit affects such educationally valuable excursions.





Coleg Y Cymoedd – Film and Television Set Design

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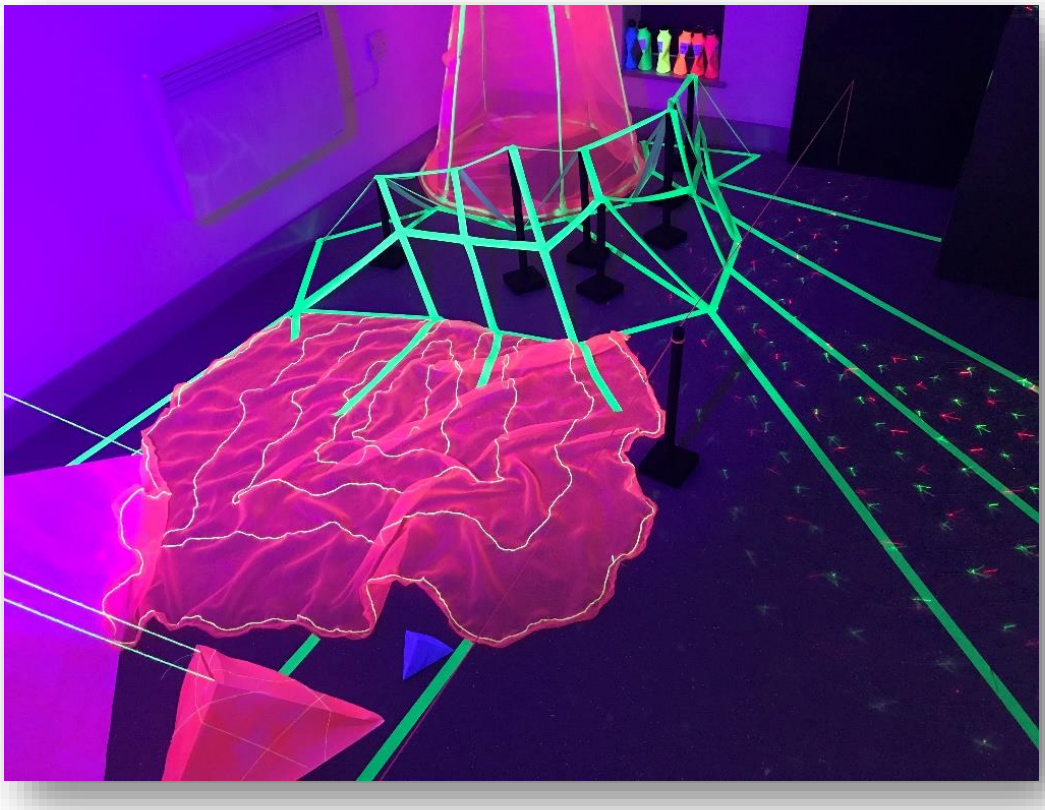
Conclusion

Moderators have reported an increase in recruitment for the September 2019 intake. Several smaller WJEC courses have reported receiving a growing number of student applications and offering up to 40% more places. It is hoped that the recruitment will turn into confirmed enrolments in September.

The growing reputation of WJEC Foundation provision is confirmed by several encouraging factors already mentioned. Foundation Course teams continue to contribute excellent teaching and administration; often in an adverse climate of cuts in teaching hours. Everyone concerned with the delivery of the Foundation experience is to be congratulated on their outstanding efforts that are fully appreciated by all partaking students and by the WJEC Art and Design team. With such commitment; and with the satisfaction rating of students very high; in combination with the continual raising of achievements; the future for WJEC FAD looks very encouraging.

Hedley Jones

Hedley Jones
FAD Principal Moderator, July 2019



Ashton College – Textiles installation

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