

# Examiners' Report Summer 2010

## GCE

**Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied Art & Design  
(Single Award: 8711)/ (Double Award: 8712)**

**Edexcel Advanced GCE in Applied Art & Design  
(Single Award: 9711)/ (Double Award: 9712)**

**Edexcel Advanced GCE with Advanced Subsidiary  
(Additional) in Applied Art & Design (9713)**

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Summer 2010

Publications Code UG023416

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## 1 - GENERAL COMMENTS

- This was the fifth moderation of the Advanced Subsidiary and the fourth for the (A2) GCE in Applied Art and Design. However, it was the first under the new and revised Specification at both levels. The new revised Specification had seen the introduction of a fourth mark band to all units of the qualification, revisions to some Unit titles and assessment strands. Quality of Written Communication (QWC) was also introduced to the qualification and this was also the first year that the A\* was awardable on completion of A2.
- A number of centres had been accredited on a unit basis following previous moderation series.
- Centres had generally followed guidelines for moderation and the work was well presented. Work was usually clearly labeled and/or cross- referenced appropriately.
- The evidence for the AS Unit 6 (Single Award) and/or Units 6 and 7 (Double Award) - Summative Project and the Unit 11 (Single and Double Awards) - Synoptic Project was clearly identified.
- Portfolios were accompanied by the new 4 mark band Unit Assessment Grids and Authentication Forms.
- The report that follows is sourced from a compilation of evidence from the Moderation Team reports on the 2010 series.

## 2 - ASSESSMENT

- Generally the assessment decisions were reported to be fairly accurate, although inconsistency and slight leniency was reported for specific strands within all of the units. Some units were assessed with slight leniency across strands causing significant leniency for units overall.
- The moderation report to the centre provides individual feedback on the accuracy of assessment decisions. In many cases any inaccuracy in the individual assessment strands for the units will be identified and reported on. Centres are requested to refer to their 2010 Moderation Report as it will contain information that will assist them with their review on assessment. These reports can be accessed online via centres' Examinations Officers.
- Most centres now follow the practice of presenting the Portfolio and Optional Unit work holistically through a number of projects and assignments. In most centres the portfolio work for the AS and the A2 levels had been presented separately with the Summative and Synoptic Project work being clearly identified.
- Most centres had assisted the moderation process by clearly indicating evidence against unit criteria on the assessment grids. When assessment grids were annotated this was very useful to moderators in providing information on the justification for the assessment decisions. This was particularly the case when grids were comprehensively annotated. Moderators still report that some centres are still failing to provide useful information on the assessment grids and are requested to do so in future.

### 3 - ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY GCE IN APPLIED ART AND DESIGN (AS)

#### The Summative Project:

#### 6906 Unit 6: Develop Set ideas and 6907 Unit 7: Produce Set Ideas

The 2010 paper was comparable with earlier papers, having a similar format but a new theme - 'Change'. The externally set paper had enabled centres to devise appropriate methods of delivery that provided candidates with opportunities to address all of the assessment criteria through individually devised project proposals.

The Externally Set Assignment included a theme and scenario. The vocational aspect was addressed by the inclusion of a client list from which candidates selected the most appropriate for their chosen area of study. A self-identified client could be chosen if appropriate and relevant and some centres had done this by making use of live briefs. Included with the paper was a Project Brief Outline requiring details of the candidates' chosen subject, client, and consideration of constraints.

#### 3.1 - 6906 Unit 6: Develop Set Ideas

The theme of 'Change' had generally been well received. Responses were explored and interpreted with some diversity. Common responses and approaches explored issues concerned with changes in time, changes of points of view, changes in fashion, changes in local architecture, change through the process of abstraction. Many centres had written supplementary briefs. This approach was reported to have helped guide candidates to an appropriate theme within the theme to cater for candidates' abilities and needs. A similar approach was sometimes seen via the delivery of specific skills at the start of the project from which candidates could then begin to produce their own experimental work and develop ideas. It was apparent that many centres had provided the opportunity of visits to generate primary source material. In some cases centres had provided initial primary and secondary sources to assist candidates in seeking their own additional evidence. However, overall it was noted that secondary source material was more prominent than primary.

Candidates often preferred to work from their own photographs when direct observational study would almost certainly have enhanced and broadened the information they had to work with. In the best practice a range of ideas had been explored independently by candidates and it was evident that this had been in response to the suggestions given in the paper and/or by centres own supplementary briefs and paperwork. In the weaker work seen it was common to find limited initial exploration of the theme of 'Change', with candidates selecting an idea rather prematurely. This had resulted in a rather narrow, linear exploration that had inhibited freedom of approach in the development work and restricted choice of direction.

The unit had generally been assessed with a fair degree of accuracy. Where inaccurate assessment had taken place this was often due to slight leniency and leniency across the revised assessment strands, but was most common to assessment of strand a and d as highlighted in the comments on the strands below.

#### a. The ability to research and analyse primary and secondary sources

- Assessment of this strand was fairly accurate. However, when assessment was inaccurate it was found to be as a result of a lack of the identification on the formal elements in others' work and an over reliance on secondary sources.

- In the best practice the range of self-directed visual research contributed directly to the development of project work. This practice had improved in some centres, although many still need to encourage candidates to produce precise visual information that can inform the development of ideas.
- Leniency was noted in project work when there was a lack of identification and critical analysis of the formal elements in others' work. Furthermore, when references to the work of others' had been made the connections between these and the candidates' own work was tenuous or not fully explained.
- There was some good evidence of appropriate critical and contextual references being carefully selected by centres, and indeed candidates themselves, to explore the theme and develop ideas. When this evidence had been covered soundly; with a sense of understanding of the techniques and processes used in others work to fully appreciate the work it contributed favourably on the quality and depth of ideas and indeed final outcomes.

b. The ability to generate a range of visual ideas, formal elements, materials, techniques and processes

- When assessment decisions were inaccurate for this strand they were generally found to be lenient. In such cases it was as a result of centres not reflecting the range and / or quality of the development of ideas.
- As in previous years and in accordance with the unit criteria; the generation of ideas was dependent on the range of work produced for assessment strand a. It is no co-incidence that the limited collation and exploration of sources in relation to the theme resulted in a limited range of visual ideas being produced. This was particularly evident in the weaker portfolios and a factor in lenient assessment decisions.

c. The ability to develop visual ideas to prototype, using skills in materials, techniques and processes

- As in previous years the evidence showed more extensive work in 2D than 3D. Candidates working in 2D recorded the development of ideas in sketchbooks and sheets to prototype well and in the best instances comprehensively. However, the equivalent 3D evidence through the production of maquettes, samples and tests with materials and processes was more limited.
- Where evidence of the generation of ideas (Assessment Strand b) was more extensive the work for this strand was more focused and successful.
- In some cases candidates had moved too quickly to consider the final work without full consideration of alternatives.
- Safe working practices had often been recorded and considered in the production of prototypes.

d. Evaluation

- In the best practice ongoing annotations of the development of ideas referred back to the brief and to the audience (clients), either real or simulated. Furthermore, such evidence often showed a strong awareness of the constraints and opportunities inherent in their brief. Ongoing reflection and reviews often allowed for the refinement and modifications of ideas and this usually resulted in more focused outcomes.
- In weaker work ongoing annotations lacked depth of critical analysis and limited

understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas developed in relation to the brief.

- The written and visual evaluation of ideas and approaches to project work is essential practice for the more rigorous and independent work of the A2 year and an important aspect of learning through self-monitoring, organisation skills and critical thinking. All too often evidence of the aforementioned was lacking and the cause of lenient assessment decisions.

### 3.2 - 6907 Unit 7: Produce set ideas

It was reported last year that the evidence clearly indicated that the quality and effectiveness of the candidates' response was closely linked to the thoroughness with which the initial project proposal had been written; all reports this year reconfirm the effectiveness of this good practice.

Many centres had produced carefully structured extensions to the set brief and supported candidates in the analysis of that brief and in preparing effective Project Brief Outlines. Carefully considered project proposals helped to focus candidates on both the project planning and evaluation.

In cases where centres had devised a brief that contained rather limited information to guide and support the candidates, this was reflected in the subsequent candidate performance.

Assessment of the unit was generally accurate although there were instances of inconsistency reported. Adjustments were often slightly lenient across the assessment strands or lenient in one particular strand rather than severe. The main issues with the interpretation of the criteria were:

- Assessment Strand a - planning lacked depth and project management was sometimes inconsistent. Attention was not made to the performance descriptors of the mark bands in the revised specification.
- Assessment Strand b - interpretation of the performance descriptors for each of the 4 mark bands relating to this strand were not taken into account. Commonly the most leniently assessed strand of the three.
- Assessment strand c was often assessed with varying degrees of leniency with evaluation not covered sufficiently to warrant the marks awarded.

#### a. Planning to produce a final outcome.

- Evidence varied from excellent to rather poor although overall there had continued to be an improvement in project planning.
- Where practical action plans, log books or diaries had been used candidates were enabled to organise their time and resources more effectively.
- In some cases candidates had completed centre devised planning timetables but had not always made full use of these to monitor or inform their project work. It was clear that such guidance material benefited the weaker candidates.
- Other evidence demonstrated well-guided and monitored visual evidence showing organisation and sequential development.

#### b. Use of specialist materials, techniques and processes to produce a final outcome

- For the production of the final outcome there was evidence of the use of a range of media, materials and processes in 2D and 3D, from fine art approaches to design solutions.

- Weaker candidates appeared to produce final outcomes without going through a considered art or design process so that alternative ideas and forms were not fully explored and there was little evidence of the refinement of final pieces.
- Effective project management schemes had encouraged a more confident and successful realisation of ideas.

#### c. Presenting and evaluating the final outcome

- As in previous years video presentations and witness statements were presented in a number of centres to evidence presentations. This year reports indicate alternative and additional evidence has been used with PowerPoint presentations, blogs and Facebook pages being utilised by centres and candidates.
- Where time had been provided at the end of the project for reflection and presentation this had resulted in more focused and detailed evaluation.
- The careful selection and organisation of work at the end of the project, editing and refining the project portfolio, had also contributed to the effectiveness of the evaluation process.
- In weaker work, evaluations only gave an account of what the candidate had done and often made no reference to the technical or aesthetic qualities of the finished work or the original intentions or constraints of the brief.

## 4 - 6901 UNIT 1: 2D AND 3D VISUAL LANGUAGE

### Portfolio Units:

**Unit 1: 2D and 3D Visual Language**

**Unit 2: Materials, Techniques and Processes**

**Unit 3: Visual Communication and Meaning**

There has been some adjustment to the assessment strand evidence and range of marks available for some strands in this unit under the new, revised Specification. All assessment strands have been re-written and are now worded differently with each having a slightly different emphasis and focus compared to the previous issue of the Specification.

Assessment Strand 'a' is now solely focused on the collation and use of primary and secondary sources. The description and analysis of others use of visual language that was previously part of this strand is now part of the revised Assessment Strand d. The content and weighting of marks for strands b and c of this unit, along with their wording, has also changed under the revised Specification. QWC has also been introduced to assessment strand d. Despite the changes to the strands of this unit and emphasis placed on some of these the assessment of the unit was generally fairly accurate.

Evidence was usually clearly identified and presented as a combined submission with Unit 2: Materials, Techniques and Processes. This has been the practice of centres since the beginning of the qualification and one that is indeed encouraged and is always reported to work well. Centres presented a range of introductory projects exploring visual language in 2D and 3D, with themes commonly including natural structures, surfaces and forms such as plant-life, food (fruit, vegetables) and also with man-made subject matter such as architecture, machinery and domestic objects.

As in previous years the evidence showed more extensive work and thorough explorations in 2D than in 3D. As the work in 3D still remains limited in many centres it still continues to inhibit the mark potential for the unit. Where this imbalance was seen, the moderation team addressed this



in their reports to centres. However, reports indicate that some centres have been able to acquire and use external visitors/practitioners to broaden 3D by offering workshops to supplement project work. Other centres had used very simple and accessible but effective materials, for instance paper and card, to explore 3D visual language and formal elements. This had enhanced the experience and understanding of learners and increased mark potential for strands b and c of the unit.

a. Work from a range of primary and secondary sources

- A lack of recording and use of primary sources was often reported - particularly observational drawing.
- Where there was evidence of work from observation using set subject matter or visits to specific locations the quality of this was variable.
- An over reliance and use of secondary sources was noted.
- The best evidence included primary and relevant secondary sources that were used to identify starting points for creating and developing ideas.

b. Exploration of 2D and 3D visual language, combinations of formal elements, mark-making and object-making.

- In most cases delivery was via a number of vocational projects supported by skills workshops and exercises contributing to work.
- The range of media and techniques employed for such approaches was good but sometimes served to mask or replace visual language skills; the main focus of the unit and this strand.
- Where effective exploration of visual language had taken place it had not always been considered and applied to project development for strand c.
- A lack of 3D visual language, combinations of formal elements and object making was still reported despite some improvements in this area. This impeded the mark potential of this strand and often resulted in lenient assessment decisions.

c. Use of 2D and 3D visual language, mark-making and object-making to develop and realize ideas and intentions.

- In some centres printmaking, digital image manipulation or other intermediary techniques were effectively used to develop alternative 2D ideas. It was very encouraging to see more evidence of digital manipulated imagery being used as a tool to explore ideas, rather than as the means to produce final outcomes.
- The best evidence showed the combination of formal elements used selectively and appropriately to develop ideas in project work.
- The most successful work showed systematic study and progression through visual language development and the design process. This was usually delivered through a well-structured program of project work in 2D and 3D.
- At the lower mark range there was often limited work in the stage of development between the original idea and the final outcome. In these cases the lack of development work inhibited the generation of innovative final ideas. (It is appreciated that this can be the most difficult stage of the creative process. More focus and time allocation to this stage may be advantageous).
- In the way that drawing and painting had been used for the development of 2D ideas, the 3D equivalent of making maquettes as a means of development in 3D work was often limited, with some 3D outcomes being developed via 2D drawings. This limited the exploration of combinations in object-making.

d\*. Description and analysis of how others have used visual language in their work, and evaluation of your own use of visual language and how others' work has influenced your ideas.

- The use of contextual references has continued to improve, although students did not always evaluate how others' work had influenced their own. Evidence for this was still sometimes limited to a mention of the artist or designer, or merely through visual clues in the work itself.
- Analysis and evaluation of own and others' use of formal elements and visual language were limited in annotations and evaluations. Visual evidence was used but this is not sufficient to justify placements in Mark Band 3 and 4 where very little or no written evidence was presented.
- Work at the lower end lacked sufficient depth of understanding and showed a basic use of vocabulary.
- Where centres had developed delivery and teaching materials that supported and directed the students in how to analyse and describe others' use of visual language, and most importantly, value their individual responses, the coverage of this strand was good and assessment more accurate.
- Consideration of the QWC had not always been taken into account in assessment decisions.

## 5 - 6902 UNIT 2: MATERIALS, TECHNIQUES AND PROCESSES

Generally the evidence was clearly identified and presented as a combined submission with Unit 1: 2D and 3D Visual Language. As in previous years the evidence showed more extensive work in 2D than in 3D. As reported in Unit 1, the work in 3D remains limited in many centres and this continues to inhibit the mark potential for the unit. As with Unit 1, where this imbalance occurred the moderation team addressed this in their reports to centres. Assessment was reported to have been fairly accurate overall. In the instances where assessment was inaccurate it had mostly been lenient and most commonly in relation to assessment strands a, b and d.

a. Investigate working with a range of materials and techniques exploring the characteristics and properties of materials

- As had been previously reported the range of 3D is to some extent dependent on the centre's provision of 3D making facilities and resources. However, some centres are beginning to use easily accessible materials such as paper, card, straws and found objects to enhance the experience of learners when working in 3D.
- 3D evidence was sometimes restricted to one project that limited opportunity for exploration of the formal elements in 3D.
- There were only a few reports of centres having used, or given time to investigate, 3D materials, techniques and processes freely outside of the constraints of a brief.
- The best evidence showed 3D investigation in the formal elements running alongside the 2D investigations. Many projects and themes offer the opportunity to do this. Successful themes include natural forms, still-life/objects, structures, surfaces, and architecture/architectural details.
- The best 2D evidence was found in centres that had covered an extensive range of techniques in drawing, painting, printmaking and textiles.
- The use of digital photography and computer-manipulated imagery continues to grow and be used effectively as an important creative tool.

b. Explore the potential for using materials and techniques or combinations of materials and techniques to develop ideas

- Reports continue to indicate that the exploration was very good in many centres. The potential though, once explored, was not always realised through the development and outcome stage and this sometimes limited achievement.
- Combinations were very strong where the initial work on the formal elements had shown breadth of experimentation. This was reported as being particularly strong in 2D Fine Art, surface pattern and textiles work.

c. Use materials, techniques and technology safely in creating and developing finished work

- Health and Safety evidence is reported as being well acknowledged by centres and indeed learners. Such evidence was commonly seen and provided via centre devised proformas and witness statements. However, while these provide some good documentary evidence they are not solely sufficient as evidence for this strand. There remains a need for candidates to demonstrate an independent understanding of good health and safety practice. Learners need to present relevant information related to the activities they engage in in order to fully address the health and safety aspect of this strand.
- There was good development in the use of 2D materials, techniques and processes. However, where extensive exploration was reported this was often at the expense of work in 3D materials, techniques and processes. Centres are reminded that extensive 2D work cannot compensate for 3D provision.

d\*. The analysis and evaluation of the creative potential and limitations of your use of materials, techniques and technology.

- Reports still continue to indicate that evidence of analysis and evaluation was limited in some centres. The best evidence was drawn from students who had engaged in more formal, ongoing exercises, guided and supported by the tutor.
- The identification of the potential and limitations of materials, techniques and processes used was noted to have been identified more explicitly and coherently in annotations within sketchbooks, design sheets and in some instances log books and journals. However, the analysis and discussion of the creative potential of areas for further development reported as not being as well covered.
- Consideration of the QWC had not always been taken into account in assessment decisions.

## 6 - 6903 UNIT 3: VISUAL COMMUNICATION AND MEANING

There is still some inconsistency and misunderstanding concerning the focus of this unit in some centres though steady improvements in delivery and assessment have been reported. Generally, the evidence was integrated across the AS portfolio. However, reports highlight that the best evidence and strongest work for this unit emanates from centres that deliver a specific project to meet the demands of this unit. Centres adopting this approach also used the work for the Summative Project: Unit 6 and 7, as further assessment evidence. Where specific vocational briefs had been presented mark potential and assessment was more accurate for strand b and d than in centres that had only recognised that the work for unit 6 and 7 had offered more opportunity to address the needs of the audience for strand b. As a result, there was missed opportunities to meet some of the evidence here and work often showed a limited response to assessment strand b which asks for the identification of the 'audience' so that the 'meaning or message' can be specified. This had impacted on assessment strand d, where commonly, learner evidence often failed to show understanding developed via personal critical analysis. Design and 'live' briefs were reported to have provided the best evidence for this unit.

a. Analyse visual communication in the work of others

- Contextual referencing continues to improve however, the analysis of and responses to the work of others' varied considerably in focus. Some centres make effective use of references from contemporary design and craft practice and work placements. However, as reported previously, the majority of references are still from the fine art world with limited craft and design references. Centres need to increase source material in this area to make up this shortfall.
- The identification of the use of the formal elements as a means to visual communication in others' work is not been covered in sufficient depth in some centres. Consequently, this impedes how learners can understand for themselves how they can communicate their ideas using the formal elements and visual language in their own work.

b. Identify an intended meaning or message for a specific 'audience'

- It remains evident that the identification of the 'audience' was more rigorous in centres where 'live' or simulated briefs have been used.
- Design briefs were found to have been more successful in allowing learners to identify and consider the needs of the audience.

c. Use visual communication to develop your own work.

- This work continues to be seen as fully integrated in sketchbooks, design sheets and in trials, samples, maquettes for a range of project work.
- The success of the development of ideas and project work was dependent on the quality and vocationality of the brief that had been issued. It was also dependant on the work of the previous two strands. The ability of students to apply their developing understanding of visual communication to their own work was variable depending on each of the aforementioned issues.

d. Evaluate how effectively you have used visual communication in your work

- Leniency in assessment decisions was noted where there was very limited evidence of recording and evaluating ideas throughout the creative process and gathering others' responses to the work.
- Evaluations often referred to the overall success of the work, and did not fully address how it communicated meaning and messages.
- The reported best evidence was provided both visually and with sound supporting ongoing written evaluations and a summative evaluation.

## 7 - 6904, 6905 Units 4 and 5: The optional units

### Unit 4: Working In 2D

### Unit 5: Working In 3D

The evidence for these units continues to be more clearly identified each year, through more discrete presentation and signposting on the assessment grids. Moderation reported lenient assessment decisions across the strands where the evidence did not show sufficient development from the work of Units 1 and 2. This was particularly apparent where students had tended to repeat earlier work, rather than develop new 'solutions' to new 'problems'. Some centres had introduced new approaches to the development of 2D visual language via photography, life drawing, printmaking etc and for 3D through workshops with practitioners ranging from ceramics, puppetry and found object sculptures. These new approaches to 2D and 3D work had

presented new challenges, and it was these challenges that had deepened the students' understanding of the technical and aesthetic potential of new ideas.

A few centres chose these units to work with a practitioner and a 'live brief', or to devise a 'live brief' in collaboration with a local company. These vocational activities were very successful in generating the required evidence for these units and indeed others such as Unit 3.

In the majority of cases, candidates had built on their earlier experiences to develop their ideas and practical skills.

As with last year, Unit 5 had a much smaller entry, but was selected by centres where the facilities and resources were sufficient for 3D development beyond the work generated for Units 1 and 2.

Moderation reported lenient assessment decisions across the strands of both optional units where the evidence did not show sufficient development from the work of Units 1 and 2.

### **7.1 - 6904 Unit 4: Working in 2D**

Whereas the focus of Units 1 and 2 is to practice and develop visual language skills and to explore, experiment and understand the use of a wide range of specialist 2D and 3D materials, techniques and processes, Unit 4 requires candidates to 'develop 2D skills through one or more specialist areas' and to 'analyse, refine and present 2D work'.

Usually separate projects were delivered for this unit. Some centres had produced briefs that encouraged new work that developed effectively from the introductory work of the earlier units.

There was some change to the presentation of the evidence this year compared to last year. Where a more discrete presentation occurred this had resulted in greater consideration of the unit specification resulting in more accurate assessment.

In the best practice seen there was a wide range of drawing and painting media supported by work in print, fabric and textile work, photography and computer generated and manipulated images. High achieving work showed a deepening level of visual enquiry and extensive creative and technically competent experimentation. This was developed and extended by a successful outcome and supported by clear reflective skills and critical analysis of candidates' own and others' work.

#### **a. A range of 2D investigative techniques - sources and contexts**

- The unit was normally delivered through a project or series of projects and exercises with a more challenging focus.

#### **b. Ability to develop a range of 2D ideas**

- There was, in most cases, clear development from work carried out for units 1 and 2, but sometimes this needed better signposting via the assessment grids.
- There was usually a range of experimentation and investigation of 2D ideas. Sometimes this work was seen as an end in itself - which is the focus of much of the work of the earlier units - instead of being used effectively to develop ideas. Centres are reminded again of the need for students to 'analyse, refine and present 2D work' for this unit.
- In best practice students had produced a series of development studies from a range of source materials that refined ideas and visual form and led to the production of

accomplished outcomes; this was usually in response to a set brief.

c. Ability to produce a 2D outcome using and exploring the potential of media, materials and processes

- In many cases, the 2D work for this unit was incorporated in a body of work that developed from initial studies in the formal elements through to a range of projects or mini briefs, designed to apply or to develop further skills in the formal elements to develop and refine ideas to produce a final 2D outcome.
- Finished work included painting, printmaking, photography, mixed media work, textiles and graphics with emphasis on the exploration of the potential of media, materials and processes.

d. Ability to analyse, refine and present 2D work

- Many examples of improved analysis were reported; perhaps reflecting the more independent and individual work presented.

## 7.2 - 6905 UNIT 5: WORKING IN 3D

As with previous years, there were fewer submissions for this unit than for Unit 4. The work for this unit included a range of techniques, predominantly sculptural rather than 3D Design based. There was evidence of a range of work using materials such as clay, plaster, wire and wood. There was sometimes limited individual development work beyond the basic techniques to fully justify the evidence for one complete unit.

Levels of technical skill were adequate but much of the work was produced using low technology materials and processes such as card and paper resulting in a lack of depth in the exploration and use of a greater range of materials and techniques required for the unit.

a. A range of 3D investigative techniques - sources and contexts

- The work produced for this unit was dependent on centre resources and staff expertise. Generally, this unit was chosen if there was a specialist 3D teacher teaching on the programme or available to deliver it.
- Some centres had clearly developed their teaching and learning to support this unit and extended the experimentation of 3D work by introducing new disciplines such as ceramics, metal work and plaster casting and carving. There was evidence of the use of very relevant and contemporary references to inform work.

b. Ability to develop a range of 3D ideas

- The best work usually contained evidence of a range of maquettes and/or models with supporting investigative tests and trials with materials and techniques.
- The development and recording of ideas and the making processes through photography was often inconsistent
- The quality of the briefs was a big factor in allowing learners to extend their experiences of working in this discipline.

c. Ability to produce a 3D outcome using and exploring the potential of media, materials and processes

- Some centres encouraged the production of several outcomes showing good exploration of a range of materials and processes. This exploration sometimes came to fruition in the

'summative' project.

- Where centres were able to introduce specialist practitioners to the program, this usually resulted in better recording of processes, health and safety considerations and the production of more finished work.

d. Ability to analyse, refine and present 3D work

- Good evidence was produced when centres had worked with practitioners
- Some of the best work for this unit showed a very broad range of well- developed ideas.
- There was some good evidence of learners considering the presentation and photographic documentation of finished work.
- Where photographic records of the project and the making process had been carried out it assisted in making evaluative comments regarding the refinement of ideas and the success of finished work.

## 8 - Advanced GCE in Applied Art and Design (A2)

### 6911 Unit 11: Develop and Produce Own Ideas - The *synoptic* project

As in previous years, the moderation team reported varying degrees of success with this unit. However, they confirmed that an improved performance overall was seen this year, with candidates producing their best work for this unit.

There were however, reports of inconsistency in the assessment decisions with these being placed in the wrong Mark Band although decisions were not necessarily far out in terms of point scores.

The work for this unit was usually combined with the work of one of the optional units; Unit 12 being the usual combination. Much of the evidence showed candidates working on a major final project for the A2 year and there were some excellent and innovative results.

The expectation for this unit, and in combination with one of the optional units, is for an approach that allows candidates to work in the pathway of their choice. Too often this was not the case, with some centres constraining their students to a prescribed brief in a given pathway. Sometimes, class size made this expedient, but at other times the limitation of choice was reflected in work that did not show the students' performing at their most engaged and industrious.

Other limitations were evident were the visual source material lacked breadth and depth which inhibited the potential for the creation of visually exciting and imaginative ideas. The *synoptic* project should be the culmination of all previous experience. It was clear that where a well devised and challenging brief had been generated, this had encouraged the identification, collection and use of visually exciting and stimulating source material resulting in the work being more successful.

The *synoptic* project does not contain an externally set theme, but centres must ensure that the *synoptic* brief, available online, is made available to all candidates and discussed fully with them prior to the commencement of any work. Although the *synoptic* project serves more as a guidance document, it is revised every year, so centres must ensure that they are working with the current year's document.

The focus of the unit is on the research, development, production and display of work which answers a vocational brief and the proposal must contain reference to all of these important aspects if the 'Applied' nature of the qualification is to be fully realised and understood.

The evidence of planning was patchy; there was evidence of some very well considered weekly planning documents, but also of little or no evidence beyond the sequence of the work itself. Some so called 'planning' documents had been completed retrospectively and these were identified as reports not forward plans; again, where this had taken place, planning and therefore the 'Applied' nature of the qualification requires greater support by delivery teams. Some centres, so identified, may need to consider generating a planning sheet which will become a working document throughout the project. This should help the candidates in making good decisions on progress and creative development and to use their time wisely when addressing each important stage of the project.

The project work was often approached quite independently with clients being identified. However, the constraints were not always very well identified.

#### a. Analysing the brief and planning the project

- Once again, some candidates produced a 'Statement of Intent' in response to Tutor guidelines. The centres are reminded that this material must be transferred, in full, to the official Edexcel 'Project Proposal' which accompanies the Unit 11 paper, and presented for moderation with the Unit 11 work.
- The quality of the 'Project Proposals' varied enormously; in some cases the client was clearly stated, but sometimes the client and the constraints were less considered and in some cases, neglected during the development of ideas. Centres must support their candidates with maintaining adherence to the constraints of the brief.

#### b. Creating and developing ideas in response to the brief

- Once again the work for this unit was usually combined with one of the other optional units, to enable candidates to execute a major piece of work in a pathway of their choice. The combination with Unit 12 provided the opportunity for the creation and development of a range of ideas. However, Unit 12 should provide delivery time for a range of creative ideas through research and experimentation; this was not always as fulsome, focussed or as in-depth as it could have been.

#### c. Planning and producing final outcome using specialist working methods and processes

- Whilst there were reports of some very successful and well resolved final pieces in response to the brief, the planning was not always well evidenced. Planning is an important part of working on an Applied qualification; it is an important transferable work skill and some centres need to be reminded that failure to support this aspect of the unit, not only limits mark potential, but inhibits the skills development necessary in order for candidates to evidence this important achievement.
- The logging of specialist working methods must be better evidenced. This may well be asked for by the 'client' in a real life situation and should always be considered as an essential practitioner skill.



#### d. Evaluation of ideas, planning and finished work

- Candidates who had developed good skills in evaluating their progress and achievement throughout the programme produced the best evidence and showed that when confident to do so they could produce valuable evidence, quite independently.
- The moderation team reported that where ongoing evaluation was evident - of ideas, planning and finished work - it highlighted the importance of this practice in enabling candidates to meet the constraints of the brief and to maintain close adherence to the requirements of the brief. It also demonstrated good practice in terms of professional working (Unit 10).
- The following statement was included in last year's report and the moderation team have asked that it be reiterated -

'The final evaluation should take place once the 'client' - real client, tutor, peers - has appraised and responded to the finished work. Candidates should then have the time and opportunity to consider this feedback and make their evaluation in response to it - Will they need to change anything in the light of this feedback?

Do ideas need to be revised, refined?

These considerations should be the focus of the final evaluation of the work. In weaker presentations this was not seen, with evaluations often being little more than an account of 'what they did'. The opportunity of the work of Unit 8 (presentations and receiving feedback) to support this element now becomes more apparent.'

- Best practice explored alternative ideas and approaches and used technical language to discuss critically both the project process and final outcomes. Weaker evidence tended to include descriptions of what had been done in carrying out the project work and contained no suggestions for future development or refinement of the work.
- It was clear that feedback is a vital tool for encouraging a more self-critical vocabulary.

#### 9 - 6908 Unit 8: Personal and Portfolio Development and Progression

There were reports that few learners were evidencing everything that is required in a very clear way. There remains in some centres, a worrying lack of vocational awareness of the very wide and diverse range of work available in the creative industries.

Unit 8 requires a range of evidence with many elements. Teachers must ensure that all the elements of each assessment strand are delivered and assessed as it is important for each learner to demonstrate coverage of all the strands in their work. Moderators reported that some centres have made use of the checklists delivered during the online training for the 'Re-launch of the Qualification' event that many teachers attended, and some had even adapted these for their learner's use. These checklists can be self generated from the Specification - refer to the 'What you have to produce' section for this revised unit in the Specification.

Centres are reminded, that although some of this evidence will be generated through work on other units, the importance of the development of 'Applied', transferable work skills cannot be emphasised strongly enough.

#### a. Personal presentation and communication skills

- It was reported last year, that the practice of compiling a ring folder of evidence including information such as; progression aims, health & safety, application forms, CV writing etc, was extended, but this seems to have been neglected or not improved upon by some centres this year. Some centres still need to give greater consideration to how the evidence is generated, collated and managed and they may find some comment concerning this in their moderation report.
- Sometimes evidence of mock interviews and presentations was not available at moderation.
- Witness statements and feedback comments regarding mock interviews and group or individual presentations were included by some centres, however some centres had not encouraged learners to make use of this feedback to improve their presentation and communication skills.

#### b. Portfolio presentation techniques

- This had improved, but some centres are still not appreciating the importance of the work skills; selection, compilation, mounting, visual effects etc, inherent in this activity.

#### c. Identifying and pursuing progression goals

- The absence or limited evidence of research into the work place including job descriptions, specifications and requirements will have been commented on in the moderation report. The importance of this research skill is an important tool for learners on an 'Applied' qualification, and should help support informed decision making when considering progression.
- In most cases, evidence was presented in the form of progression routes to Higher Education and Further Education courses.

### 10 - 6909 Unit 9: Contextual References

The moderation team reported, overall, that there was still leniency in the assessment decisions for this unit.

Good practice showed learners being encouraged to study the work of others as a matter of course and the research tended to be well used. Many Illustrated essays showed evidence of an independent and focused piece of contextual writing with QWC accurately assessed.

In some centres the scope was perhaps too wide with delivery teams trying to cover too much ground. Understandably, a very broad study will inhibit depth and contextual understanding. Appropriate research into the work of contemporary practitioners; existing products, historical developments in the art, craft and design sectors, will require a set of skills that learners have to develop. The achievement of effective research must be one of the most important 'Applied' skills that we are able support. It is undoubtedly a difficult task to access and locate informative, relevant, genuine material from the plethora of information now available. Research material must be carefully selected, clearly identified and sources of information recorded accurately by learners.

Downloaded material from the internet does not provide evidence of the learners' ability to undertake research.

Learners should keep comprehensive records of their research activities using appropriate logging techniques to demonstrate the depth and validity of their research work. This comment applies as much to secondary research work in other units as it does to the work in this contextual unit.

a. Research historical and contemporary work, understand the context in which the work was influenced

- The research was once more closely linked to the learners' own work and this encouraged a greater understanding of the context of the work referenced.
- Engagement with live work often provoked a more enthusiastic response and aided understanding.
- The arrangement for visiting practitioners had been extended by many centres this year and this had provided additional first hand evidence for this and Unit 10.
- References are still predominantly in the 'mainstream' category of fine art; centres must encourage more research into the historical development and contemporary practice within craft and design, particularly for those learners whose interests lie in these areas.
- It was reported that lower achievers continue to need much support with the development of research and analytical skills. There were still many cases from this category of evidence that fell below the standard expected at this level.

b. Record and present information explaining the use of visual language in others work

- It was reported last year that where students had the opportunity to visit exhibitions/studios, the evidence for this criterion was recorded with more confidence and the feedback reported this year reconfirms this.
- Well planned and managed trips to museums and galleries had offered candidates the opportunity of first hand experience.
- There was better evidence this year of the explanation of visual language in others work, but some centres are still not encouraging sufficient, in-depth study.

c. Use contextual references in your work

- The research of historical and contextual references has continued to grow, resulting in portfolios that showed a broader range of knowledge and understanding.
- The best evidence showed relevant study that was challenging the students' critical thinking and influencing and informing the development of their ideas.
- The weaker evidence indicated that little attempt at any real in-depth analysis or understanding of the communication, relevance and context of the work and how such study can be used in the learners' own work.

## 11 - 6910 Unit 10: Professional Practice

The moderation team reported many rather lenient assessment decisions for assessment strand a.

a. Investigation and analysis of professional practice

- Centres who are still failing to provide guidance on this unit should consider providing a menu of appropriate practitioners for their learners. These might be from both local research (the best, if contact is to be made) and other sources, e.g. Internet.

- The protocol of approaching practitioners must be addressed; this provides the opportunity for learners to develop appropriate skills in communication (Unit 8 evidence) with people and agencies outside their own place of learning.
- Some centres had arranged visits to practitioners' studios and art and craft centres. Others had encouraged the learners to research how contemporary artists work and had used this information when working on their own projects.
- Once again, good evidence was generated when local artists and designers were invited in to demonstrate or talk about their work. This provided the opportunity for students to engage with and report directly on the work of a practitioner. However, centres need to ensure that part of the arranged presentation is given over to discussion of day-to-day professional working practice. They will need to discuss this requirement with the practitioner, and also help the cohort prepare questions that have this focus.

b. Application and development of professional practice in own work

- Once again, those centres who had engaged with a practitioner or had arranged work placement reported the positive impact this had made on the learners' approach to their own study.
- The 'application' of professional practice has continued to improve. Design briefs requiring attention to professional constraints and practice have encouraged this.
- Some centres are still not encouraging this practice sufficiently.

c. Investigation and allocation of health and safety and legal requirements

- The evidence of health and safety and legal requirements varied in quality, but was often included as log sheets or downloaded information from the internet. The Specification outlines the need for students to summarise, understand and apply appropriate information into their working practice. Some centres have worked hard to integrate this work into their delivery, but many centres are still giving scant attention to this very important criterion.

d. Appropriate standards of professional working.

- The best evidence showed witness statements and feedback sheets to learners.
- Assessors need to apply this criteria carefully when identifying evidence of the organization and care taken with the presentation of all work.

## 12 - 6912, 6913, 6914 UNITS 12, 13 AND 14: THE A2 OPTIONAL UNITS

### 12.1. 6912 Unit 12: Fine Art

a. Recording of experiences or information to develop intentions

- Some reports indicated that a separate body of work had been generated for this unit and that the responses to the briefs set had once again been of a very high standard showing

innovation in ideas development and application; skilful handling and combinations of media.

- Other moderators reported that evidence was drawn from across the entire A2 portfolio, with evidence being generated as part of the development work for a design brief.

b. Use of materials, processes and technology, or a combination of materials, processes and technology to develop ideas

- Sometimes the learners were offered a choice of theme, or new approaches in the exploration of ideas were introduced. In most cases the focus on the development of a greater visual awareness and approach to recording and expressing ideas had been effectively encouraged.
- In their assessment decisions, most centres had considered work from across the portfolio that addressed this criterion.

c. The ability to analyse, refine and present a personal, coherent and informed response realising intentions

- The evidence showed that analysis and refinement was essential for the successful realisation of intentions and this was clearly evident in the most successful work. This highlights the importance of this criterion in the realisation of innovative fine art work.

d. The ability to evaluate the creative potential and effectiveness of the developed idea

- Due to the extensiveness of evidence for this unit there was much visual evaluation. Many learners had showed the 'value' they had placed on their emerging ideas through the confident use of extensive samples and trials and sequential development via working drawings.
- Weaker work showed limited evidence and it was sometimes difficult to determine the students' ability to make decisions about the effectiveness of their work. Some delivery teams had organised group critiques specifically to support and develop these evaluative skills and this excellent practice had helped the less confident students.

## 12.2 - 6913 Unit 13: Design

a. Resolving the needs of a brief to develop intentions

- The moderation team reported that the success of this project was often dependent on the generation of an exciting and challenging brief which allowed learners to apply skills already learnt, and to develop the ability to address both the aesthetic and the functional aspects of design.
- There must be a clear sense of intention and objectives accompanied by purposeful analysis of requirement, supported by realistic planning.
- Those learners that had not been presented with a clearly defined and focused brief, often failed to find a direction for their work. This resulted in mere collections of source material that did not inform the project work or stimulate alternative ideas.

b. Development of a range of ideas in response to a brief

- The quality and the breadth of the range were dependent on how closely the learners had focused on the brief. Again, it was clear that the brief had to contain enough detail to encourage a range of ideas.

- Many delivery teams are developing a better approach to the development work for this unit and are understanding that an organised and methodical approach to design leads to strong development work and successful outcomes.
- Some very effective work was seen, particularly research and development of ideas addressing contemporary issues.

c. Production and presentation of a design solution

- There were reports that although work for assessment strand b - the design process stages of research and development - was showing improvement; the lack of refinement to something approaching professional production and presentation standard, was still limiting mark potential. Delivery teams need to become better informed of these standards so as to be able to encourage and support achievement in this strand. (Support from Unit 10 work is suggested).
- There were still many instances where limited visual language skills and technical competence had adversely affected learner's ability to pursue project ideas to satisfactory conclusions.

d. Evaluation of the creative potential and effectiveness of the developed idea

- Once again, the evaluations were more often related to how the work was produced rather than being focused on the potential and effectiveness of the idea in relation to the brief. The practice of reflecting on the 'fitness for purpose' of the work produced and exploring its potential needs more support. This is a very important learning curve for A2 learners; good evaluation will do much to develop self-critical appraisal and the understanding of design concepts.

### 12.3 - 6914 Unit 14: Multimedia

Once again, this unit had not been widely delivered.

Essentially, the unit aims to encompass traditional equipment and new technological hardware, software and media processes.

The moderators reported very varied evidence produced for this unit, with multimedia outcomes including a wide range of film making, photography and web design skills which were well edited and evidenced.

The assessment decisions for Assessment Strand a were often lenient; the strand requires the learner to have 'a record of information to develop intentions'. Sometimes, there was very little preparatory work available or explanation of the planning of multimedia approaches. Good practice showed annotated screen shots that documented development.

a. A record of information to develop intentions

- The evidence for this stand included well catalogued photographs and computer generated images, often supported by technical notes and annotations on emerging ideas.
- The evidence of the documenting of computer editing processes in the form of screen grabs has improved, but still needs improvement in some centres.

b. Development of multimedia ideas by combining technology media processes

- There was rather limited evidence of traditional development, but more on digital development and combinations of technological media processes.

c. Analysis, refinement and presentation of a personal, coherent and informed response realising intentions

- Assessment decisions for this Strand showed some leniency where limited evidence of decisions; refinement, explanation of improvements to the final outcome and evaluative comment.

d. Evaluate the creative potential and effectiveness of the outcome

- Whilst there was some good evidence of individual reflection on the work produced, centres are reminded that the evaluation must focus on the success of the work through the responses and feedback from others. A variety of audience feedback should be sought, relevant to the work being produced.

(Centres are asked to ensure that all work for this Multimedia unit be presented in a format that will be accessible on a PC, as most moderators use these at Moderation. Also work is sometimes selected by moderators for awarding purposes, and Edexcel requires work that is easily accessible by their pc systems. Please will all centres delivering this unit carefully check access prior to Moderation, to save delays and possible technical problems on the day of the visit.)

## 13 - STATISTICS

### AS UNITS

Unit 1 2D and 3D Visual Language (6901)

Unit 2 Materials, Techniques and Processes (6902)

Unit 3 Visual Communication and Meaning (6903)

Unit 4 Working in 2D (6904)

Unit 5 Working in 3D (6905)

Unit 6 Develop Set Ideas (6906)

Unit 7 Produce Set Ideas (6907)

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	48	42	36	30	24
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

### A2 UNITS

Unit 8 Personal and Portfolio Development (6908 )

Unit 9 Contextual References ( 6909)

Unit 10 Professional Practice and Progression ( 6910 )

Unit 11 Develop and Produce Own Ideas (6911)

Unit 12 Fine Art (6912)

Unit 13 Design (6913)

Unit 14 Multimedia (6914)

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	60	55	50	44	38	32	26
Uniform boundary mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40

**Maximum Mark (Raw):** the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

**Boundary mark:** the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

**Grade boundaries** may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

April 2010



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