

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

June 2011

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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June 2011

Publications Code UA027305

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General Comments

- A number of centres had been accredited for various units following the 2010 moderation series, and did not receive moderation for these units this year.
- Centres had followed guidelines for moderation and generally the work was well presented; it was clearly labelled with the evidence for the Summative Project, the Synoptic Project and the Portfolio and Optional Units clearly identified. Portfolios were usually accompanied by the Unit Assessment Grids and Authentication Forms; sometimes these were presented in a separate folder.
- The report that follows is a compilation of feedback evidence from the Moderation Team on the 2011 series.

Assessment

- The assessment of the AS units was fairly accurate, the only concern reported was with and Units 4 and 5 and Unit 7.
- For A2, the assessment was fairly accurate although there were some slightly lenient assessment decisions reported for Unit 8: Personal and Portfolio Development and Progression, Unit 10: Professional Practice and Unit 12: Fine Art. (Details to follow).
- The moderator writes an E9 report on your centre's assessment decisions. Please refer to the Moderation Report for your centre as it will contain information that will assist your assessment review.
- Most centres had supported the moderation process by clearly indicating evidence against unit criteria on the assessment grids; where there were full annotations with information on the justification for the assessment decisions. this was very useful to moderators.

Advanced Subsidiary (AS)

The Summative Project:

The theme for the 2011 Externally Set Assignment was 'Viewpoints, Points of View'. The Externally Set Assignment had enabled centres to devise appropriate methods of delivery that provided candidates with the opportunity 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 could select the most appropriate for their chosen area of study. A self-identified client could be chosen if appropriate and relevant; some centres had done this by making use of live briefs.

Included with the paper was a Project Brief Outline document requiring details of the candidates' chosen subject, client, and consideration of constraints. The candidates were required to fill this in at the beginning or very near to the beginning of the project (Perhaps after initial thought showers, mind maps etc), and to date and sign it.

6906 Unit 6: Develop Set Ideas

The theme of 'Viewpoints, Points of View' had generally been well received. Responses were explored and interpreted with some diversity. Common responses and approaches explored issues concerned with a variety of physical 'Viewpoints'; whereas focus on 'Points of view', had provoked concern and an exploration of a variety of social issues and this had generated some very imaginative and personal responses.

Many centres had written supplementary briefs. This approach was reported to have supported and guided candidates to an appropriate sub 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. Most responses tended to be directed towards fine art, but there was evidence of design application in areas such as graphic design, photography, fashion and textiles. However, there was less three-dimensional design work.

The majority of centres had ensured that candidates completed the Project Brief Outline forms. It is paramount that candidates fill this form in as a starting point and outline any issues that may affect their project development. It should read like a statement of intent. The applied nature of the qualification means that constraints should naturally occur within a project brief and the Project Brief Outline form provides the candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate an understanding of what these constraints are and what methods they intend to employ to work within them.

The unit had generally been assessed with a fair degree of accuracy. Where inaccurate assessment had taken place this was often due to a slight leniency across the assessment strands.

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

- The Moderation team noted that there was a reliance on digital photography as a means of producing primary evidence, rather at the expense of drawing. Candidates often preferred to work from their own photographs when direct observational study would almost certainly have enhanced and broadened the source information they had to work with.
- Some centres had organised visits, including overseas; these had often provided valuable primary source material, eg architecture
- 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 'Viewpoint, Points of View', 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. Overall, it was noted that secondary source material was more prominent than primary.
- Weak candidates had a lack of critical analysis in others' work or an over reliance on secondary sources at the expense of primary investigations. 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.
- 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 could inform the development of ideas.
- There was some good evidence of appropriate critical and contextual references being carefully selected to explore the theme and develop ideas. When this evidence had been covered soundly; with an understanding of the techniques and processes used in others' work it contributed favourably to the quality and depth of ideas and the final outcomes. Analysis of this material to develop and understand of meanings and messages provided good supporting evidence for Unit 3. It was noted that those candidates who chose the 'Points of view' aspect to investigate and explore a variety of social issues had necessarily had to analyse meanings and messages in others' work in some depth.

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

- There were reports of some very good, extensive development of ideas using a range of techniques and processes.
- When assessment decisions were inaccurate for this strand they were generally found to be lenient, this was largely due to an underestimation of the range required. 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 might be expected and it was very notable in the good work seen, where evidence of the generation of ideas (Assessment Strand b) was more extensive the work for this strand was more focused and successful.
- It was noted this year by the moderation team that some centres hadn't stressed the requirement of the candidate to produce a prototype; subsequently if this candidate was a Double Award student and had to undertake a final outcome as part of Unit 7, it was difficult to differentiate between their prototype and the final outcome. It is also important that this prototype is for a potential client and that the candidate is reminded to be aware of this demand when presenting a possible solution. Candidates that had understood the applied nature of their prototype had produced exciting and innovative outcomes, whereas weaker candidates had lost this focus and their outcomes were less successful.
- As in previous years the evidence showed more extensive work in 2D than 3D. Candidates working in 2D recorded the development of ideas via working drawings in sketchbooks and on design 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 notably more limited.
- The better centres had required the students to make references to Health and Safety guidelines in their on-going self-reflection and annotation. Sadly, despite frequent reporting here and in individual reports, too many centres are neglecting this very important aspect of art and design practice.

d. Evaluation

- Research and development work should be appraised against the brief and client requirements at key stages. In the best practice ongoing annotations of the development of ideas continually referred back to the brief and to the client (target audience), either real or simulated. Furthermore, such evidence often showed a strong awareness of the opportunities and constraints 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 showed a lack of critical analysis and limited understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas developed in relation to the brief; they tended to be descriptive of the processes involved in producing the work rather than analysing the works effectiveness.
- The sequential 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, organising and critical thinking. All too often evidence was lacking and the cause of lenient assessment decisions.

6907 Unit 7: Produce Set Ideas

- The reports on the accuracy of the assessment decisions for this unit indicated some inconsistency and a degree of leniency. It is felt that some centres having previously worked hard to improve evidence of planning are now being rather neglectful of this practice and its importance in developing independence.
- As previously reported the quality and effectiveness of the candidates' response was closely linked to the thoroughness with which the initial Project Brief Outline had been written and all reports this year reconfirm the importance 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. Where these had been carefully considered this had 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.

The main issues with the interpretation of the criteria were:

- Assessment Strand a – planning lacked depth and project management was sometimes inconsistent.
- Assessment Strand b – commonly the most leniently assessed strand of the three, as with last year, the interpretation of the performance descriptors for each of the 4 mark bands relating to this strand were sometimes not very well interpreted.
- Assessment Strand c - often assessed with varying degrees of leniency. This was largely due to evaluation not being evidenced sufficiently to warrant the marks awarded.

a. Planning to produce a final outcome

- As in previous years, evidence varied from excellent to rather basic project planning. As the allocation of marks for this strand is highly weighted it is important for centres to ensure their candidates make their planning more explicit rather than just implied. Where practical action plans, log books, Gantt charts, 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. Where planning was considered to be of only a competent standard this was largely due to the presentation of just the sketchbook of work. The Applied nature of this qualification calls for a more 'work related' approach to this criterion and centres should consider the transferable work skills that could be developed here.

- It was clear that providing guidance and planning material benefited the weaker candidates. Other evidence demonstrated well-supported 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. Although there was again a predominance of 2D Fine Art outcomes.
- 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 stated in Unit 6, it is important for the final evaluation to refer back to the intentions of the original brief and the requirement of the client and/or the audience.
- Along with considering of what was successful and what was rejected, the candidate needs to appraise the strengths and weaknesses of the final outcome and their use of specialist materials, techniques and processes.
- In presenting the work was the presentation appropriate to the form and the client? At the best centres candidates had been encouraged to either show or visually represent their work 'in situ', providing a realistic and effective presentation of their work in an applied context.
- Where time had been provided at the end of the project for reflection and presentation this had resulted in more focused, detailed and analytical 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.

The Portfolio Units

6901 Unit 1: 2d And 3d Visual Language

- 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 is always reported to work well. Centres have continued to present a range of introductory projects and tasks to explore Units 1 and 2. It is common to have themes including natural structures, surfaces and forms and also man-made objects such as machinery, domestic objects and architecture. These themes were suitable for candidates of all abilities as well as fitting the criteria well.
- As in previous years the evidence showed more extensive and thorough explorations in 2D than in 3D. The 3D work remains limited in many centres and this continues to inhibit the potential for the unit. Where this imbalance has been seen, the moderation team has continued to address this in their reports to centres. However, centres are reminded of the diagnostic nature of this qualification especially in the AS year and urged to give their learners the opportunity to fully experience the whole range of visual language (Unit 1) and materials, techniques and processes (Unit 2) as outlined in the Specification.
- Some centres had extended the use of very simple and accessible materials, such as paper, card, wire, simple modelling materials such as modroc, etc to explore 3D visual language. These centres, despite not always having 3D expertise amongst teaching staff members, had enhanced the experience and understanding of learners and increased mark potential for strands b and c. They are to be commended to this response to Moderator feedback.

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.
- Moderation teams commented that observational drawing tends to be neglected and that digital photography is used as a means of generating primary sources. Weaker candidates had then copied these photographs, which meant they hadn't recognised the formal qualities of this source material as a means to inform or inspire their own work.
- The best evidence included primary and relevant secondary sources that were used to identify starting points for creating and developing ideas. An over reliance and use of secondary sources was noted.

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

- The range of media and techniques employed for was good (Unit 2) but this sometimes served to mask or replace visual language skills (Unit 1); the main focus of 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.
- Despite last year's report, there was still a notable lack of 3D visual language, combinations of formal elements and object making. This impeded the mark potential of this strand and often resulted in lenient assessment decisions where the evidence failed to fully encompass the unit requirement.

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

- Centres were effectively using image manipulation or other intermediary techniques to develop a range of 2D ideas, although it is very encouraging to see more evidence of digital manipulated imagery being used as a tool to explore ideas, an over use of Photoshop (especially the application of numerous filters) can also be a very cosmetic way of approaching the development of ideas.
- 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 demanding stage of the creative process hence the reason this strand attracting the most marks. Centres are asked to consider giving more focus and time allocation to this stage.
- The development of 3D work, making 3D models and maquettes was rather limited. Most 3D solutions were developed via 2D design drawings alone. This limited the exploration of combinations in object-making. This is an important and meaningful creative activity and should be further encouraged.

d. Evaluation – the use of visual language in your own work and how others' work has influenced your ideas

- The use of contextual references has continued to improve. However there were predominantly investigations into 2D Fine Art, with few

centres extending the range into designers and craftspeople, especially those who apply a more 3D approach.

- Learners need to comment on how the work of others' had influenced their own work. Evidence for this was still sometimes limited to a mention of the artist or designer, or merely through visual clues in the work itself. Visual evidence was used but this was not sufficient to justify placements in Mark Band 3 and 4. The development of analytical thinking is an important element in this strand.
- Consideration of the QWC had not always been taken into account in assessment decisions. Centres are reminded of this important aspect of individual development.
- 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.

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. However the evidence, as in previous years, showed more extensive 2D work than in 3D. As reported in Unit 1, the work in 3D remains limited in many centres. 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.

Providing good quality photographic documentation, especially of 3D object-making can be highly beneficial as evidence for assessment strands c and d.

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 and b.

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

- As previously reported the range of 3D was to some extent dependent on the centre's provision of 3D making facilities and resources. However, some centres are beginning to make more use of easily accessible materials such as paper, card and wire to enhance the experience of learners.
- The 3D evidence was sometimes restricted to one project that limited opportunity for exploration of the formal elements in 3D. The best evidence showed a range of 3D investigation in the formal elements running alongside the 2D investigations and carefully chosen projects and themes offered the opportunity to do this. Successful themes

included natural forms, still-life/objects, structures, surfaces, and architecture/architectural details. 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 2D evidence was found in centres that had covered an extensive range of techniques in drawing, painting, printmaking, photography and textiles.
- The use of digital photography and computer-manipulated imagery has become increasingly commonplace and where used effectively has shown itself to be a creative tool. However, as mentioned in Unit 1, employing Photoshop with little direction (such as endless filter applications) can result in purely cosmetic responses at best and be meaningless at worst.

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. This sometimes limited and hindered achievement.
- Combinations were very strong where the initial work with the formal elements had shown breadth of experimentation. This was reported as being particularly strong in 2D Fine Art, photography, surface pattern and textiles work.

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

- Health and Safety evidence was reported as being acknowledged by centres and learners. Sometimes the evidence was provided via centre devised proformas and signed witness statements. However, while these proformas and witness statements provided some good documentary evidence they must not be solely sufficient as evidence for this strand. Weaker candidates had presented only photocopied health and safety handouts or downloaded material. There remains a need for learners to show a personal knowledge and understanding of good health and safety practice, they need to present relevant information related to their own creative activities 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 a lack of 3D provision.

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

- Moderation reports still indicate that evidence of analysis and evaluation was limited in some centres. Consideration of the QWC had not always been taken into account in assessment decisions. It is important to assess the candidates' ability to use the correct terminology and specialist vocabulary accurately and in depth.
- The best evidence was drawn from students who had engaged in more formal, ongoing exercises usually guided and supported by the centre.
- 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 was reported as not being as well addressed.

6903 Unit 3: Visual Communication and Meaning

The best evidence for unit 3 was seen when it was integrated across the AS portfolio. The unit is now rarely addressed as a separate visual communication project. Evidence for the unit comes in the form of written art and design history notes and analysis of examples from visits to galleries. The best practice was where the learner's investigations and analysis in the work of others' was constant and contributing to the project work.

There were many instances of lenient assessment decisions for this unit. Evidence for assessment strand 'b' had only been an issue when the vocational aspect of the qualification had been poorly considered. Good quality design briefs will always ensure that a specific 'audience' is addressed. Poor choices of topic/task showed themes that were too open-ended or conceptual and it was often the case that the lower performing candidates struggled to engage in communicating potential meanings or messages through their project work.

Centres that adopted the more holistic approach to Unit 3, were also able to include the work for the Summative Project: Units 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. In assessment strand d, 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, lower achieving candidates were still relying too heavily on collated imagery that, despite being relevant, was not accompanied with any form of written analysis.
- The majority of references are still from the Fine Art world with limited Design and Craft references. Some centres make effective use of references from contemporary practice and work placements. However, as reported previously, centres are still advised to increase source material in these areas and extend the range of investigations.
- The identification of the use of the formal elements as a means to visual communication in others' work has still not been covered in sufficient depth in some centres. Consequently, this has impeded the development of understanding of how to communicate ideas using the formal elements and visual language in their own work.

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

- The audience may be the client, or it may be the target 'audience' that the client requires the work for. In either case consideration of the 'audience' is paramount and will affect the approach and the monitoring of the work as it is developed. This requires further consideration by many centres. The use of research to discover how work targets specific groups can be a useful and sometimes much thought provoking activity.

c. Use visual communication to develop your own work

- This work continues to be fully integrated in sketchbooks, design sheets and in trials, samples and maquettes for a range of project work.
- The success of the development of ideas and project work was dependent on the quality and vocational focus of the brief that had been issued. It was also dependant on the work of the previous two strands. The ability of learners to apply their developing understanding of visual communication to their own work was dependent 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 of 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 best evidence was provided both visually and with sound supporting ongoing written evaluations and a summative evaluation that had brought an activity or project to a realised conclusion.

6904, 6905 Units 4 and 5

The best evidence for these Units was where there had been significant development from the work undertaken in Units 1 and 2 and where learners had been encouraged to tackle the Unit as a separate entity in their own right and develop new 'solutions' to new 'problems'. Moderation reported lenient assessment decisions across the strands where the evidence did not show sufficient development from the work of Units 1 and 2. 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 often contributed good evidence for Unit 3.

As with last year, Unit 5: Working in 3D 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.

6904 Unit 4: Working in 2d

Whereas the focus of Units 1 and 2 is to practise 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'.

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 deeper 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 learners' own and others' work.

a. A range of 2D investigative techniques – sources and contexts

- The criteria may require the challenge of a 'problem' to solve and is designed to extend the candidate's ability to use what they have learnt in Units 1 and 2 and to apply this to a new brief and to use investigation to inform ideas. Centres were not always challenging their candidates sufficiently to apply their skills independently.

b. Ability to develop a range of 2D ideas

- There was usually a range of experimentation and investigation of 2D ideas; however, some moderators reported a significant lack of breadth in drawing and mark-making techniques as the means of visually recording and documenting investigative ideas. Centres are reminded again of the need for candidates to 'analyse, refine and present 2D work' for this unit.
- In best practice candidates 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 Unit 4 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 produce a final 2D outcome.
- Best evidence showed work included painting, printmaking, photography, mixed media work, textiles and graphic design with emphasis on the investigation of ideas rather than the repetition of the exploratory work that is the focus of Units 1 and 2.

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.

6905 Unit 5: Working in 3d

As with previous years, there were fewer submissions for this unit than for Unit 4. As with Unit 4, if the centre generated a discrete Unit 5 brief there tended to be more scope for the assessment criteria to be fully covered and for marks to be awarded accurately.

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.

Levels of technical skill were adequate but much of the work was produced using low technology materials and processes 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. The best evidence provided relevant and contemporary references to inform the 3D 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 working drawings or photography was often inconsistent. Where the making process was illustrated through a good use of photography this helped to inform and support the awarding of higher marks. Limited recording of making processes limited mark potential.
- 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 the good investigation of a range of materials and processes. This investigation sometimes came to fruition in the 'summative' project.

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

- Although the uptake of this unit was not high, there was some good work presented which showed a very broad range of well-developed ideas. The obvious enjoyment that candidates derive from 3D work was evident.
- There was some good evidence of candidates 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 the generation of evaluative comments regarding the refinement of ideas and the success of finished work.

Advanced GCE Applied in Art and Design (A2)

6911 Unit 11: Develop and Produce Own Ideas - The Synoptic Project

Some centres encouraged a 'Statement of Intent' which was often located within the workbooks, and annotated the 'Project Proposal' to signpost this evidence. If a 'Statement of Intent' is generated, this must be transferred in full, to the Edexcel 'Project Proposal'. This must be presented with the Unit 11 work.

The completed Project Proposal document is a requirement of the A2 Synoptic Project.

Centres must ensure that the published *synoptic* brief is made available to candidates and discussed fully with them as it contains valuable information for the candidates to reference, this is important even when a supplementary brief is delivered.

The Project Proposals must be thorough and well written in order to provide adequate information for candidates to respond to with surety and confidence.

On the whole, these have been very good this year and much improved, with many including a wide range of ideas, intention as well as constraints. The focus of the unit is on the research, development, production and display of work which answers a vocational brief and the proposal should contain reference to all of these important aspects.

a. Analysing the brief and planning the project

- Reports suggested that project management was on the whole very sound, with research, contextual referencing and evaluation all effectively undertaken. Where two units were linked by the project, the work was usually more substantial, but project work addressing two complete units had to be very substantial and sufficient to cover the criteria of two units. This was not always the case and these centres must review the delivery of the *synoptic* and associated optional unit to ensure adequate coverage of two sets of Unit criteria.
- There were some very good examples of project planning showing candidates having real control and ownership of all the processes involved in the creative cycle and design methodology.

b. Creating and developing ideas in response to the brief

- Where the unit was 'twinned' with Unit 12, the work involving the exploration and creation of ideas was sometimes consigned to Unit 12. (This sometimes meant that the true ethos of Unit 12 had not been sufficiently addressed). Some centres are now delivering these two units together but changing the focus somewhat – and having a common

starting point with development work that then diverges and goes in different directions into two sets of work. This approach appears to have been quite successful.

- It is important that when combining Unit 12 and 11, a brief is generated for each. This enables candidates to understand the demands and requirements of both units.
- 'Twinning' with Unit 13 was most successful when Unit 11 was a design brief and the strong emphasis on adherence to the client and the constraints allowed for a more extensive, often better developed response. Again, the evidence has to be substantial.

In combining units, centres must consider that this is solely for the purpose of producing a substantial final major project in a pathway choice.

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

- There was some very good work produced for this unit and unit combination this year.
- The logging of specialist working methods still needs to be better evidenced. This maybe the required by the 'client' to show production considerations and constraints, particularly in design work. This recording is, nevertheless, good practice in all cases.

d. Evaluation of ideas, planning and finished work

- The range of evidence for this assessment strand still varies considerably. Candidates who had developed good ongoing evaluative skills throughout the programme produced the best evidence independently.
- There was much evidence indicating that where ongoing evaluation was focused on ideas, planning and development, the importance of this practice in helping candidates maintain close adherence to the requirements of the brief was highlighted. It also demonstrated good practice in terms of professional working (Unit 10). The most successful evaluations were produced as the work progressed with the value placed on the effectiveness of ideas, changes of directions, best working methods etc.

The centres are reminded, once again, that the final evaluation should take place once the 'client' (or Tutor and 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. They need to ask - Will they change or refine anything in the light of this feedback? Such 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'.

6908 Unit 8: Personal and Portfolio Development and Progression

a. Personal presentation and communication skills

- The practice of compiling a ring folder of evidence including information such as; progression aims, health & safety, application forms, CV writing etc, has been extended again this year.
- Witness statements and feedback comments regarding mock interviews and group presentations were included by some centres; however some centres have made little improvement in providing this important feedback to their students.

b. Portfolio presentation techniques

- As reported previously, portfolio presentation continues to improve and show a more professional approach particularly in those centres where the anticipated progression was to FE or HE. However, lower achieving candidates often presented very disorganized and unfocused portfolios. This indicates the need to help every candidate make the very best presentation of the work they produce.

c. Identifying and pursuing progression goal

- The major concern highlighted by the Moderation team was for the candidates who were not considering further or higher education. In too many cases the candidates had very little evidence of realistic progression aims and goals, and it is perhaps this group that need the support most urgently.
- Work place research and job applications not evident in many centres. (Job applications - even if mock - should be written and be accompanied by CV's).
- In most cases, evidence was presented in the form of progression routes to Higher Education and Further Education courses.
- The most thorough evidence - personal statements, evidence of presentations, mock interviews etc - was presented by centres anticipating candidate progression to foundation or degree courses.

NB. An important focus is to support students in the management of their work and in the making of reasoned judgements about the specific implications of alternative progression goals.

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that this GCE Applied qualification must also support those learners who may be considering progression to the workplace. A well presented portfolio, with the confidence gained from the exercise of a presentation or mock interview, may assist candidates to perform well at job interviews. Learners should benefit from this GCE Applied qualification by developing and showing skills that are transferable

to the workplace. Any associated evidence, possibly generated in other areas of study, eg, business or IT studies, could be included in the Unit 8 portfolio.

6909 Unit 9: Contextual References

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

- The moderation team reported that contextual research was more closely linked this year to the candidates' own work and this encouraged a greater understanding of the context of the work referenced; and that engagement with live work provoked a more enthusiastic response and aided understanding.
- Although references are still predominantly in the 'mainstream' category of fine art, the evidence of references in craft and design was a little more in evidence. The use of web resources has extended the referencing in contemporary design. However, given the wealth of evidence now readily available, the teacher's role may be more in supporting methods of research and information selection, retrieval and editing. Lower achievers in particular continue to need support with their research and analytical skills. There were still many cases of evidence from this category that fell below the standard expected at this A2 level.

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

- It has been reported many times and the evidence still proves the point, that where candidates had the opportunity to visit exhibitions/studios, the evidence for this criterion showed more confidence.
- Well planned and managed overseas trips which offered learners the opportunity to engage with live work in museums and galleries had produced some good, lively and often visually engaging recording of experience.

c. Use contextual references in your work

- The best evidence showed relevant study that was challenging the learners' critical thinking and influencing and informing the development of their ideas.
- The research of historical and contextual references was still rather narrow in some portfolios.
- 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.

- The extended illustrated should allow for the development of more in-depth and independent analysis of freely chosen subject matter and also show achievement in QWC.

6910 Unit 10: Professional Practice

a. Investigation and analysis of professional practice

- Good, appropriate evidence was generated when local artists and designers were engaged to demonstrate or talk about their work. This provided the opportunity for learners to engage with and report directly on the professional life of a practitioner.
- If at all possible, practitioners should be chosen who can offer relevant support to the candidates' own progression interests. In cases where this occurred the impact on the candidates' understanding of their personal progress and ambition was substantial.

b. Application and development of professional practice in own work

- The 'application' of professional practice has improved. Design briefs requiring attention to presentation showed this visually. Other work showed improved sequential processing supported by careful and considered presentation, but this was still underdeveloped in many of the weaker portfolios.
- 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.

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

- Evidence indicated that where delivery had closely adhered to the detail of the assessment criteria as outlined in the 'What you need to learn' section of the Unit Specification, the assessment decisions were more accurate.
- 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 candidates 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 criterion.

d. Appropriate standards of professional working.

- Moderators had identified additional evidence by looking at the organization and care taken with the presentation of all work.
- Other evidence that showed candidates undertaking a professional approach to their work usually came from records of the personal observation and interaction between candidates and peers and candidate and tutor. Oral and written feedback given to candidates along with personal monitoring and self-assessment can be very supportive in helping them to manage their workload. Unfortunately this practice was not very widespread, or where evident lacked detail.
- There were some examples of very thorough and very detailed feedback and observation statements provided to candidates.

6912, 6913, 6914 The Optional units

The work presented for these units was sometimes very dependent on evidence that adhered to the requirements of Unit 11, with evidence for 12 and 13 being merely extensions to the work. Sometimes Unit 11 was closely linked with these units, so much so, that a large body of work addressed two units. (See comments also for Unit 11).

6912 Unit 12: Fine Art

a. Recording of experiences or information to develop intentions

- Many centres delivered Fine Art work as a separate body of work and some of the responses have been of a very high standard showing innovation in ideas development and application and skilful handling and combinations of media. Sometimes the intention was not clearly outlined where the brief was lacking in detail.

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

- This unit offered candidates the opportunity to extend technical language and the understanding of concepts with which to develop ideas in Fine Art. The evidence sometimes showed work that explored new ways of working and was developed with greater independence. Where there was a degree of independence, often in following self generated briefs exploring personal interests, the candidates had been more engaged with problem solving and pursuing a creative journey that had challenged their abilities to produce innovative ideas.
- In their assessment decisions most centres had taken into account and considered the 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 clearly showed that refinement was essential for the successful realisation of intentions. The better evidence proved this to be the case, whilst the weaker work only showed understanding and application of very basic concepts.

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 candidates had showed the 'value' of their emerging ideas through the confident use of technical language and sequential development via working drawings in sketchbooks and on worksheets. Weaker evidence showed limited evidence and it was sometimes difficult to determine the candidates' ability to make decisions about the effectiveness of their work.

6913 Unit 13: Design

Some of the design work presented this year showed an improvement in addressing the rigours of the design process and the constraints and challenges that one would normally associate with a design brief. Unfortunately some very good design briefs did not always result in a good final response from learners due to poor design methodology. This involves research, creating sketches and models so that ideas can be shared and analysed and then continually reworking and refining an idea or possibility in response to feedback or new ideas. In other cases the briefs were poorly constructed and did not allow for the opportunity for the free range necessary to enable candidates to venture far and wide in their thinking.

The all important presentation was improved, particularly in the stronger portfolios, but weaker evidence once again showed limited understanding of how to order, mount and display work. The acquisition of these skills and their application to this task should show the characteristics of real work in the design sector. Samples of display in the real world could be used and analysed to support this skill which can again be applied in Unit 11 and will indeed provide very valuable evidence for Unit 8.

a. Resolving the needs of a brief to develop intentions

- Graphic Design probably remains the most popular option. Other briefs on subjects as varied as café design; fashion design and lighting design were in evidence. Success in resolving the needs of the brief was patchy and was, as would be expected, dependent on the quality and detail of the brief, how well they had stuck to the intention, and their ability to address both the aesthetic and the functional aspects. One important aspect of regular review is critical analysis and feedback by peer groups, clients and audience.

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

- There was evidence of some very successful development work that shared a common starting point (theme) with the work in fine art for Unit 12.
- There were reports that an organised and methodical approach and response (design methodology) to design briefs gave the best outcomes. The weaker evidence nearly always reflected a limited ability to understand and respond appropriately to the brief, with candidates losing their way, changing direction and so losing sight of the intention of their work. As reported in Unit 11, constraints – client requirements, time and material - strictly adhered to, can provide a supportive framework for learning.

c. Production and presentation of a design solution

- It was reported last year that some work had developed well through the design process stages of research and development to fall at the last hurdle – that of the production and presentation of a design solution. Sometimes prototypes were poorly made or unresolved. Designers need to make things look real, (for example a magazine cover could be made up into a mock magazine) – for people to take them seriously.

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

- Evaluation of the creative potential of work was often overlooked. This was a shame, for there were instances where good development work was not considered fully. Time must be allowed in the timetabling of work for this unit so that the practice of reflecting on the work produced and exploring its potential becomes a meaningful and useful exercise in developing analytical and critical thought. This will often be done in project critique time through discussion. The recognition that work offers potential for further ideas and recording this potential in note form would extend the evidence for this strand.

6914 Unit 14: Multimedia

Essentially, the unit aims to encompass traditional equipment and new technological hardware, software and media processes. In this fast changing world of new technologies the access of traditional equipment and technologies is more limited so any Specification of this subject will soon become rather outdated. However, comparative reviews of others' work, particularly historical examples will necessarily involve candidates in learning about more traditional technologies and this can in many ways help with an understanding of new development.

This unit has not been widely delivered, but where successful, show improved provision and delivery. New projects have been developed which

allow access and skills building with new Multimedia, and the success of much of this work reflected the commitment some centres have made in developing this specialist area.

For centres considering delivery of this unit, a close scrutiny of the Specification is essential, so that centres can determine if their resources and expertise are adequate to deliver this unit. New technologies will always be welcome evidence as they become available.

a. A record of information to develop intentions

- The evidence of the documenting of computer editing processes in the form of screen grabs has improved, but in some cases still needs to be improved and more extensively and carefully logged.
- There was often insufficient evidence of recording of processes in other areas of work.

b. Development of multimedia ideas by combining technology media processes

- Generally the work was digital and included photography, video editing, PowerPoint presentations and web design.
- It was good to see more experimentation with video and animation, with some examples of very good vocational outcomes.

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

- Intentions often realised effectively, but there needs to be an improvement in analysis of development and results. Refinement of ideas is dependent on this work.

Grading information

The grading, awarding and certification of this qualification follows the processes outlined in the current GCSE/GCE Code of Practice, which is published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA).

The criteria for assessing each assignment have been written so that a learner working at the lower end of the GCE ability range should be capable of meeting approximately 80 per cent of the band 1 criteria. This equates to approximately 40 per cent of the total credit available for the assignment.

The mark bands used for internal assessment do not relate to pre-determined grade boundaries. Following each examination and moderation series, Edexcel will set the grade boundaries for internally and externally assessed units at an awarding meeting.

The raw mark boundaries will be converted to uniform marks on a scale of 0-100. The final grade for the qualification will be determined by aggregating the uniform marks for the units.

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Order Code UA027305 June 2011

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