Moderator's Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2015

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

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

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

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General Comments

The report that follows is a compilation of feedback evidence from the Moderation Team on the 2015 series.

This Unit is delivered through the externally set Summative Project. It provides the opportunity for candidates to work on a vocational focused brief. They are required to respond to a set theme given by Pearson Edexcel which is published on the website in September. This year the theme was *Deconstruct and Reconstruct*. Overall this appears to have been well received by the majority of centres.

The candidates have to demonstrate the ability to plan, research and develop ideas to a prototype stage in response to the theme for a chosen client. The candidates are required to research and analyse a range of primary and secondary sources. From these they are required to generate a range of visual ideas by exploring a variety of different materials, techniques and processes. This should allow the opportunity to explore further a range of formal elements and a variety of media and methods. Candidates also need to consider the visual communication of their work and trying to establish meanings and messages that are aimed at a specific audience. They are required to select their most successful idea and develop it to the prototype stage.

Throughout the whole process the candidate needs to reflect on their work. Their ideas need to be supported with some written annotation to explain, as well as clarify, their working methods, changes in direction as well as evaluate the strength and weaknesses of their work.

6906 UNIT 6: DEVELOP SET IDEAS

a. Research and analyse primary and secondary sources

Moderators commented that there was a reliance on photography as a means to produce primary evidence at the expense of drawing.

Photographs were used with inconsistency, with candidates evidencing poor quality, blurred and un-cropped images. Some candidates also spend time copying the photograph as opposed to using it as a springboard for drawing development.

Candidates, from some centres, were directed towards secondary source material at the expense of primary. Moderators commented that more primary research could be afforded to create breadth and the investigation of other possible ideas. The heavy reliance on secondary research meant the chance to draw on their experience found in other units was not always fully exploited. This prevented these candidates from developing substantial exploratory bodies of work. When more capable candidates had forged strong connections to contextual studies, there was added breadth to the research and it often formed the foundations of developmental work.

b. Generating a range of visual ideas using formal elements, materials, techniques and processes

The candidates are expected to generate a range of initial ideas, using the relevant visual research information they have gathered. The emphasis is on the generation of ideas with an exploration of a variety of ideas using drawing, experiments with media and other appropriate methods. These developmental studies should be annotated to explain the ideas and clarify the methods of working.

Some candidates took the opportunity to employ all the materials, methods and approaches explored in the previous units. This resulted in some resolved and consolidated ideas. In some centres there were some very good examples of well-formulated and evaluated ideas.

c. Develop visual ideas to prototype, using skills in material, techniques and processes

There is still a tendency to feel that the evidence for this strand is a resolved well-executed outcome. However as the specification encourages, the candidate should use an appropriate range of skills in materials techniques and processes to produce a prototype.

As has been mentioned year after year, the ongoing concern with the Double Award candidate is that without a recognisable prototype(s) it is difficult to differentiate between this assessment decision and the one that is targeted for Unit 7 assessment strand b. The better examples seemed to be when these candidates had produced a wide range of prototypes to justify choice and use of specialist media, materials and techniques in the production of a final outcome. Purely producing a smaller version of the final

outcome is often misinterpreted as being highly effective and often incorrectly assessed in the higher Mark bands.

d. Evaluation

It is important, when generating and developing ideas, for the learner to use appropriate annotation. They are encouraged to comment and reflect on their work throughout the process. These can be submitted in various formats visual, verbal and written. When all are evidenced the assessment decisions are accurate. However with little or no evidence of written some leniency in the assessment occurs. Not enough is made to the candidates about being self-critical and the need to articulate strengths and weaknesses in their use of visual language needs to be more pronounced as does the need to reflect back on the original intention of the brief.

6907 UNIT 7: PRODUCE SET IDEAS

This unit is delivered through the externally set Summative Project. It provides the opportunity for candidates to work on a vocational focused brief. They are required to respond to a set theme given by Pearson Edexcel which is published on the website in September. This year the theme was *Deconstruct and Reconstruct* and overall this appears to have been well received by the majority of the centres.

This unit gives the learner the opportunity to produce set ideas based on the development and prototype work completed in Unit 6: Develop Set Ideas. They have the opportunity to use and extend their construction skills, depending on the art, craft or design they explored in Unit 6, to enable them to realise a final outcome.

As well as employing specialist materials, techniques and processes to produce the final outcome, learners should undertake proper planning. It is also important that the candidate shows evidence of analysing their work and reflecting on their working process in order to make any developments.

a. How to plan to produce a final outcome

The majority of centres, recognising how many marks are available for this assessment strand, have a sound understanding of how to provide evidence for this strand and encourage their candidates to include week plans and/or interim reviews. Halfway reviews are now common practice, allowing the learner to take stock of their progress and outline any areas for potential improvement and progression. Some centres encouraged their learners to write up a weekly log which provided the opportunity to reflect on their development and progress but also helped to generate supporting evidence for this strand. Weaker candidates tend to only show implicit planning and this can lead to some leniency with the assessment decision for this strand.

A well-written Project Brief Outline, clearly written as a statement of intent early on at the project's inception increases the mark potential for this assessment strand. Regrettably too many state obvious intentions and present this as bullet points such as take photographs, make drawings or develop ideas, without explaining how or why and without alluding to the constraints that could hinder development and/or affect the initial plan. Without the Project Brief Outline this strand could be leniently marked.

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

There was some really exciting work produced in response to the *Deconstruct and Reconstruct* theme. Most candidates had successfully grasped the concept behind the project - to at first deconstruct something and then reconstruct it.

Moderators reported on a diverse range of responses from traditional painting and sculpture to installation, video and animation work. The use of extensive mixed media, exploring both conventional as well as

unconventional approaches meant that an interesting and creative vocabulary started to emerge in some candidates, resulting in some highly interesting outcomes.

c. Present and evaluate a final outcome

Final evaluations for this unit are now commonplace. In a few cases this was the only occurrence of a final evaluation. The quality of depth and reflection varied from the low achievers making basic descriptive comments to some high achievers making extremely detailed and reflective commentary that was broken down into key sub-headings. Most candidates also need to be encouraged to return to the original intention and the client. Only the high performing candidates seem to make reference to any original constraints and the client that they thought they may have encountered (expressed in the Project Brief Outline) and how they tackled these. Only by doing so in an analytical, judgmental and critical manner, as opposed to merely providing anecdotal descriptions of what was done, do the candidates deserve consideration for the marks available in the higher Mark bands.

6901 UNIT 1: 2D AND 3D VISUAL LANGUAGE

The evidence for Unit 1: 2D and 3D Visual Language was clearly identified. This is delivered in combination with Unit 2: Materials, Techniques and Processes.

In undertaking the Portfolio Units, centres employ an established range of introductory activities, tasks and projects. Natural forms/structures, man-made objects (tools, machinery, utensils) along with the local environment and architecture serve as the main topics. These themes were suitable for candidates of all abilities and are appropriate for the unit and assessment criteria.

2D visual language, for the most part, was delivered with confidence and assurance. The evidence consisted of evidenced drawing, painting, printmaking, photography and digital processes, notably Photoshop. Observational drawing was initiated at the start of the year and, for the majority of centres, at the beginning of a project. However, this was rarely sustained and developed. One common practice across the majority of centres was for candidates to copy directly from their own photographs as a means of generating 'primary' source material. In addition, some centres employ processes, such as printmaking, basic digital manipulations, either using Photoshop or a downloaded App, such as Instagram as a means of concealing the drawing ability of their weaker candidates.

As with previous years there was considerably more 2D development work and outcomes than 3D. In a few centres there was a significant lack of 3D. This trend continues to restrict the mark potential for the unit. Where this imbalance was seen, the moderation team have addressed this in their reports to centres.

In the exploration of 3D visual language and formal elements, centres employ accessible 3D materials. Paper, card/cardboard, clay and wire are still predominantly utilised. Some centres also employed textiles with a sculptural application with interesting results. Few centres had explored materials such as wood, concrete, stone or glass unless they have an additional Level 2 or 3 Design Technology qualifications that provide access to these resources.

Some centres had continued to extend their 2D and/or 3D provision by offering workshops delivered by external practitioners to supplement project work. This had helped to support, develop and enhance the learners' experience and understanding as well as increase the mark potential for assessment strands b and c.

Team projects focused on both 2D and 3D visual language. A failure to either record these thoroughly or identify individual contributions meant it was not always easy to ascertain the merits of an individual candidate's visual language skills, knowledge and understanding.

Assessment was reported to have been fairly accurate overall. Concerns still surround the lack of 3D investigations and explorations were again not accurately reflected in assessment decisions, impeding the mark potential for assessment strands b and c. This led to centres assessing with leniency, with it most noticeable with middle to low achievers.

a. How to use a range of primary and secondary sources and how to describe others' use of visual language

Direct observational drawing tends to be introduced right at the start of the course. However this approach was rarely sustained or developed beyond that time.

Digital photography tended to be the main method of generating primary source evidence. Low scoring candidates tended to rely solely on this approach. The process of recording and copying from digital photography is now common practice, not only amongst the weaker candidates but also the higher scoring ones. However some candidates had not fully recognised and explored further the formal qualities of this source material as a means to inform or inspire their own work. This approach had narrowed and inhibited the potential for developments in drawing.

Moderators still report that some centres bypass the need for drawing by using decorative printmaking techniques and rudimentary Photoshop. The use of popular Apps (such as Instagram) to alter the appearance of a photograph is also employed. The best evidence was when candidates used their drawing skills as means of extending and developing their digital photography. When employed with high levels of skill, creatively and imaginatively it helped to extend the creative development of the work.

There was still an over reliance of secondary sources, at the expense of effective primary recording.

All candidates research and respond to the work of others. Common practice was for the candidate to copy directly a work (mainly 2D) and/or produce a response to a work of art employing a similar use of visual language. Some good examples were found where candidates not only copied or cited their influences but began to question the wider issues as well as their meanings and messages, ideas and intentions. The impact of this manifested itself in experimental approaches to creating diverse outcomes revealing exciting potential.

b. Use a combination of formal elements, mark making and object making techniques to develop ideas and intentions

This was the most leniently marked assessment strand in Unit 1. It is appreciated that this can be the most demanding stage of the creative process hence the reason it attracts the most marks.

In most centres there is still a significant lack of 3D visual language, combinations of formal elements and object making in comparison with 2D

visual language. This impeded the mark potential of this strand and often resulted in lenient assessment decisions.

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 work in both 2D and 3D.

c. Use visual language to communicate (mark-making and object-making techniques and technologies) to develop ideas

Image manipulation was used extensively as a means of extending 2D idea development. Whereas it was very encouraging to see modern, digital manipulated imagery being used as a tool to explore ideas whereas an overly cosmetic use of Photoshop (especially the application of numerous effects and/or filters) can prevent the depth of idea generation to warrant the awarding of high marks.

Not enough was made of drawing as a means of developing ideas. Weaker candidates tend to rely solely on photography and/or image manipulation as a means of extending ideas and do not pursue drawing with enough confidence or consistency. At the lower mark range there was often limited drawing work in the stage of development between the original idea and the final outcome, when it could have been creatively employed. In these cases the lack of development work inhibited the generation of innovative final ideas.

3D development work, in the form of producing smaller 3D models and maquettes was also not fully explored. When seen to a high level it is exciting and invigorating, as it is obvious the learner is trying to formulate their ideas visually and creatively. Most 3D solutions were developed via 2D design drawings alone and some of these were weak and poorly executed. This limited the exploration of combinations in object-making. Where appropriate more focus to this approach would be beneficial.

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

All centres employ the use of contextual references. The emphasis still seems to be rooted in investigating contemporary artists. Any relevant historical (before the 20th century) investigations are rare. The Internet provides the main resource for accessing information about the work of others. The website *Pinterest* appears to be a favourite hunting ground for learners wishing to broaden their visual awareness. In some centres this is the sole source for their learners. Common areas of investigations continue to revolve around graffiti art (Banksy is popular), Pop Art and YBAs. Very few centres extend the range into pre 20th century designers and craftspeople; especially those who work in 3D. Any non-western civilisation investigations tend to be drawn from Africa, Japan (especially manga) and Australia (notably Aboriginal Art).

The higher scoring candidates are able to evaluate how others' work had influenced their own and make fluent connections. Stronger candidates in their on-going self-reflections also expressed analysis and evaluation of own and others' use of formal elements and visual language. Weaker candidates tend to provide mainly biographical information (often lifted from *Wikipedia*) about others. They fail to explain their work in relation to the work of others, limiting their understanding merely through visual clues in the work itself. Visual evidence was used but this is not sufficient to justify placements in Mark bands 3 and 4 where very little or, sometimes, no written evidence was presented.

Consideration of the QWC had not always been taken into account in assessment decisions. In light of the CIF centres should try and encourage their learners to develop their English language skills. Work at the lower end lacked sufficient depth of understanding and demonstrated only 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

Evidence was clearly identified and presented as a combined submission with Unit 1: 2D and 3D Visual Language. The themes mentioned in the Unit 1 section of this report worked well and their choice was fitting for candidates of all abilities as well as ensuring the coverage of the unit and assessment criteria.

Moderators report more extensive 2D work than in 3D. As reported in Unit 1, the work with 2D materials, techniques and processes, dominates in nearly all centres. This continues to inhibit the mark potential for the unit. Where this imbalance occurred the moderation team addressed this in their reports to centres.

As mentioned in the Unit 1 commentary, team projects made it difficult to evidence individual 2D and/or 3D skill. Some centres had failed to record such activities that again made some of the assessment decisions appear lenient. Centres that offer additional 3D focused qualifications are also able to provide more diverse range of materials, techniques and processes; as well as having good resources there is often the staff expertise to provide candidates with a greater acquisition of 3D knowledge, understanding and skills.

Providing good quality photographic documentation, especially in regards 3D object making can be highly beneficial as supporting evidence. Weak (out of focus, poor composition) photography of 3D samples and outcomes has the opposite effect.

Assessment was reported to have been a little lenient overall in this unit and most commonly in relation to assessment strand b; frequently lenient decisions were made by assessing in the correct Mark band but marking at

the wrong end. Centres tend to place marks in Mark band 3 for learners of a competent ability and rarely access the marks available for these candidates in Mark band 2.

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

The best 2D evidence was found in centres that had covered an extensive range of 2D techniques in drawing, painting, printmaking, photography and digital. Some printed textiles work had been employed effectively in centres.

The use of digital photography and computer-manipulated imagery is now commonplace. If used effectively these processes work as an important creative tool. However, employing Photoshop purely by applying decorative effects and filters can result in purely cosmetic responses at best and be frivolous at worse. Apps have also been accessed by some learners, to similar effect. Weaker candidates tend to overly employ digital software. Some centres aren't rigorous enough in putting the emphasis on their candidates submitting quality over quantity.

The range of 3D is to some extent dependent on the centre's provision of 3D making facilities and resources. Nearly all centres will employ paper, card and cardboard to enhance the experience of learners when working in 3D. If employed creatively, innovative and imaginative work was produced. The other main materials used are wire/metal and clay. With the latter, if the time and effort has been made to ensure the learners glaze and fire their outcomes, the results tend to be better. The use of papier-mâché, modroc and constructed textiles are also offered and developed. Few centres encourage their learners to work with wood, glass or stone object-making techniques. Some candidates produce relief outcomes and propose these as 3D solutions; it must be stressed that relief work constitutes a 2D outcome.

3D evidence was sometimes narrowed to only one project. This limited the opportunity for exploration of the formal elements in 3D. The best evidence showed a range of 3D investigations in the formal elements running alongside the 2D investigations. Many projects and themes appear to offer the opportunity to do this. Successful themes included natural forms, still-life/objects, structures, surfaces, and architecture/architectural details and these lend themselves to both 2D and 3D investigation and exploration.

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

This assessment strand is where the leniency in assessment resides. There was good development in the use of 2D materials, techniques and processes. However, there was still a significant imbalance with the use of 3D materials, techniques and processes. Centres are reminded that extensive 2D work cannot compensate for a lack of 3D provision.
Reports continue to indicate that the 2D exploration was very good in many centres. 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, photography, surface pattern and textiles work. The potential though, once explored, was not always realised through the development and outcome stage. This sometimes hindered achievement.

Some centres are not encouraging their candidates to explore and develop combinations of 3D formal elements. This is due to the notable lack of sustained 3D delivery. The employment of certain 3D techniques is not being fully realised with substantial 3D development work and/or outcomes. Despite allocating the correct Mark band for their candidates, many centre marks tend to be awarded too high in the band, especially for their middle to low achievers. Greater recognition of candidates' level of competence or confidence needs to be accurately reflected in the marks awarded.

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

Health and Safety evidence is reported as being well acknowledged by all centres and for the majority of learners. For candidates to access the higher marks within this strand, there is still a need to show an individual knowledge, understanding and application of appropriate health and safety practice.

The best evidence was when the learner used their self-reflections, annotations and final evaluations to fully address any health and safety considerations and practice. Weaker candidates had only presented the health and safety handouts/booklet provided by the centres. Sometimes these sheets were loose at the back of the candidates' sketchbook and looked barely touched or read.

Assessors need to authenticate learner work to provide evidence that they have achieved a certain level of performance. The use of witness statements is common practice. Stronger candidates ensure these witness statements provide the basis to demonstrate their own understanding of how to safely in creating and developing finished work in their annotations and final evaluations.

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

Moderation reports indicate that evidence of analysis and evaluation of the creative potential and limitations in the use of materials, techniques and technology were still 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 candidates who had engaged in more formal, ongoing exercises, guided and supported by the centre. The candidates were able to express themselves in the form of ongoing self-

reflections and a final written evaluation. The best evidence was analytical, where the learner had been able to explain reasons behind their work, as opposed to just providing a lengthy anecdotal description of what was done. Even the stronger candidates did not always significantly cover the analysis of the creative potential of areas for further development.

6903 UNIT 3: VISUAL COMMUNICATION AND MEANING

The majority of the centres successfully deliver and embed Unit 3 across the whole AS portfolio. Evidence should come in the form of written art and design notes and the analysis of examples from visits to galleries/exhibitions and this response should be evident in all the projects that cover the Portfolio and Optional Units. The best practice is where the learner's investigations and analysis of the work of others connects directly into the development of a project and is done continually rather than something that is done at the start of a project and then is not extended further.

Having a recognisable client and/or target audience had offered an extended opportunity to address the needs of the audience for assessment strand b. Evidence for assessment strand b only became an issue of lenient marking if the centre avoids or the candidate loses sight of the applied aspect of the qualification. Well-written project briefs always ensure that a specific 'audience' was addressed. Centres that had a real client and where learners were working on 'live' briefs were reported to have provided some of the most extensive evidence for this unit.

a. Analyse visual communication in the work of others

Contextual referencing is standard practice in all centres. However, the quality of analysis still continues to vary considerably. Weaker learners still only rewrite information that has been sourced from the Internet, offering very little analysis of the visual language, use of materials, techniques and processes or, and this is a requirement of this unit, an understanding of the visual communication and how or why it connects with their own work.

The majority of contextual references are from fine art with some design and, on occasion, some craft references. It would be refreshing to see source material that extends beyond the usual range of investigations. Some candidates have predictable investigations into 20th century modern art or popular culture. Many candidates gravitate towards the *Pinterest* website to help stimulate and generate ideas but are not then able to support this research with an understanding to the intended visual communication. The connection to the work tends to be more aesthetic than conceptual.

The identification of the use of the formal elements as a means to visual communication in others' work has 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. A far deeper analysis and greater emphasis on how the formal elements have been used as the means

to visual communication and expression needs to be articulated to merit awarding of marks in the top Mark Bands.

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

It remains evident that the identification of the 'audience' was better in centres where 'live' or well-written briefs have been used. Providing the candidates with a more vocationally orientated brief(s) allows them the opportunity to identify and consider the needs of the audience. The Summative Project helps to provide a specific 'audience' but the weaker candidates, beyond filling in the initial Project Brief Outline, can overlook this. A poorly written brief that fails to offer an applied context rarely helps the candidate. Only a few centres had not provided their learners with a brief or applied context that proved detrimental to the learners' chances of securing many marks within this assessment strand.

c. Use visual communication to develop your own work

The evidence for this was exported out of all the Unit tasks, activities and project work.

As mentioned, the success of the development of ideas and project work was dependent on the quality of the brief that had been issued. The quality is dependent on the work of the previous two strands. The ability of students to apply 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 especially with gathering others' responses/feedback to the work.

Evaluations tended to assess overall success of the work, and did not fully address how the outcomes communicated meaning and messages. Weaker candidates have a tendency to describe rather than explain processes. This hampers the mark potential for this assessment strand. Candidates who failed to produce any written conclusions to their work significantly limited their chances of securing more marks in this strand. This was again apparent with weaker candidates.

The reported best evidence was provided both visually and with sound supporting ongoing written evaluations with a final written evaluation that would bring an activity or project to a realised conclusion. The candidate was able to express the visual communication behind their work with high levels of understanding and fluency. Using the Units 6 & 7 Summative Project some candidates had an extended opportunity to provide supporting evidence for this assessment strand, especially if their evaluation recognised the needs of the client/audience and explained how the work was suitable and/or appropriate.

Optional Units - Unit 4: Working in 2D and Unit 5: Working in 3D

General Comments

The majority of AS Double Award students are entered for Unit 4: Working in 2D at the expense of Unit 5: Working in 3D. Unit 5 had a very small amount of candidates. It tended to be offered by centres where the facilities and resources were sufficient for 3D development beyond the work generated for Unit 1 and Unit 2. This reflects the issues that have been highlighted that centres are more assured in delivering 2D as opposed to 3D work.

For the most part centres deliver Unit 4 with confidence. The broad range of materials and techniques that are offered by centres result in effective outcomes. Presentation styles are wide ranging from sketchbooks, journals and display boards to installations, student written blogs (Tumblr and Instagram accounts were popular) and websites.

The best evidence for this unit is when there had been significant development from the work undertaken in Units 1 and 2, where candidates had been encouraged to tackle the unit as a separate entity in its own right and develop new 'solutions' to new 'problems.'

Some centres had introduced new and additional approaches to the development of 2D and 3D visual language. Within 2D these included: traditional photography, life drawing, specialist printmaking (drypoint, screen, lino, collagraph), graphic design and digital processes. For 3D it may have included: ceramics, metalwork and found object sculptures. Small architectural structures, such as designs for bus stops, coffee kiosks/information centres and proposals for public sculptures were considered. These were often supported by digital software, mainly *Google Sketch Up*. Innovative product design ideas and solutions are rarely seen.

A very small number of 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 successful in generating the required evidence for these units and indeed others such as Unit 3.

Moderation reported lenient assessment decisions across the strands where the evidence was only drawn from limited evidence and where centres had used solely Units 6 & 7 to provide the evidence. It is now rarely the case that candidates have been submitted for the wrong Optional Unit, on the times it does occur marks were leniently awarded or marked accurately but at the expense of the candidate scoring higher marks if correctly entered for the correct unit.

6904 UNIT 4: WORKING IN 2D

Whereas the focus of Unit 1 and Unit 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.

The best evidence for this unit was through the delivery of separate projects which built on and developed the work undertaken for Unit 1 and Unit 2. The more discrete evidence resulted in greater consideration of the unit specification resulting in more accurate assessment. Some centres had produced briefs that encouraged new work that developed effectively from the introductory work of the earlier units. However other centres had still tended to bypass this Unit and only extract evidence from Units 6 & 7 Summative Project, meaning the coverage of the unit was very thin.

The best practice was when there was a broad range of 2D media tackled with high levels of knowledge and understanding. 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 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 workshops/exercises with a more challenging focus. Some candidates immersed themselves in the experimentation and cross fertilisation of materials and techniques, using both conventional and unconventional sources and contexts. When this research was highly experimental and supported by drawing, the development tended to be more innovative and creative.

b. Ability to develop a range of 2D ideas

In most cases there was clear development from work carried out for Unit 1 and Unit 2 to support the assessment decisions made. Sometimes there still needed to be better identification where this evidence is located. Annotating the unit assessment grids could provide this.

There was usually a range of experimentation and investigation of 2D ideas. As mentioned in Units 1 and 2, too many candidates, just systematically copy from their own digital photographs without extending them into further idea development. Centres are reminded again of the need for students to analyse, refine and present 2D work for this unit. High performing learners were able to produce a series of developmental studies from a range of source materials. This allowed them to refine their ideas towards more accomplished outcomes; this was in response to a set Unit 4 brief and then further located within the Units 6 & 7 Summative Project.

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. These were 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 graphic design with emphasis on the exploration of the potential of media, materials and processes. Centres continue to rely solely on the outcome from the Units 6 & 7 Summative Project for this assessment strand as a means of justifying assessing a candidate in the higher Mark bands. Sometimes this was not fully merited and meant too much leniency with the assessment decisions.

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. As mentioned with the previous units, the better analysis and evaluations tended to offer an analytical assessment and judgement of the work produced rather than merely describing the methods and processes undertaken.

6905 UNIT 5: WORKING IN 3D

There were significantly fewer submissions for this unit. Candidates' work predominantly employed materials such as card/cardboard, papier-mâché and clay. A few centres waited for the candidates' pathway choice in Units 6 & 7 before establishing which Optional Unit to enter them. This has resulted in some candidates being incorrectly entered for this Unit when there was stronger evidence to support higher marks in Unit 4.

As with Unit 4, if the centre generated a discrete Unit 5 project/workshops there was more scope for the assessment criteria to be fully covered and for marks to be awarded accurately.

Levels of technical skill are improving. The majority of the work was produced used uncomplicated 3D technology, materials and processes. This resulted in a lack of depth in the exploration and use of a greater range of materials and techniques required for the unit. However some work was seen at centres this year that was very impressive. Architectural forms had offered a promising topic for aspiring 3D designers. Increasingly digital software such as *Google Sketch-up* has also allowed candidates to realise and visualise their 3D design ideas in exciting and versatile formats. Evidence of product design was scarce.

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. The best evidence provided contemporary and pertinent 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. However at the lower end candidates are not being provided with enough materials to develop ideas and therefore the outcomes are generally unrefined. There is little evidence from most candidates of scale modelling or maquettes building.

The development and recording of ideas and the making processes through photography was inconsistent. Where the development and making process were illustrated through a good use of photography this helped to inform and support the awarding of higher marks. Poor photography or the lack of any explanation behind the making process attracted significantly lenient assessment.

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 was then further supported by a 3D outcome for the Summative Project; however, if the centre relied solely on the latter as evidence there tended to be too much leniency in the final assessment decisions.

Where centres were able to introduce specialist 3D practitioners to their program, this usually resulted in much better recording of processes, health and safety considerations and the production of more finished work.

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

There was some good evidence of learners considering the presentation and photographic documentation of finished work. Digital software had also provided some exciting opportunities to present 3D solutions in a sophisticated and interactive manner.

Where photographic records of the project and the making process had been carried out this assisted in the evaluative thinking regarding the refinement of ideas and the success of finished work. As with Unit 4, the better analysis tended to offer an analytical assessment and judgement of

the work based on feedback produced rather than anecdotally articulating the processes undertaken.

Advanced GCE Applied Art and Design (A2)

6911 Unit 11: Develop and Produce Own Ideas

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.

Unit 11, the synoptic project, is internally assessed and externally moderated. It allows learners the opportunity to demonstrate achievement through a specialist pathway through a self-generated or centre generated brief. A guidance document is available to support both centres and candidates with the generation of an appropriate brief and this document highlights how evidence should meet the criteria of the unit requirements and the assessment grid.

In this unit there is an opportunity for learners to be assessed on the quality of written communication (QWC).

The Project Proposal

<u>The completed Project Proposal document is a requirement of the A2 Synoptic Project.</u>

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, <u>this must be transferred in full</u>, to the Edexcel 'Project Proposal'. This document must be presented with the Unit 11 work.

The Project Proposals must be thorough and well written in order to provide adequate information for candidates to respond to with surety and confidence. The Project Proposal should be more of a professional work proposal and include information on constraints.

It is sometimes the practice that units will be approached in combination; centres must carefully consider that this is solely for the purpose of producing a substantial final major project in a pathway choice.

a. Analysing the brief and planning the project

If this unit is delivered in combination, centres must review the delivery of the *synoptic* and associated optional unit to ensure adequate coverage of two sets of Unit criteria; sometimes as a result of this combination the work for one unit was limited compared to the other and this will limit mark potential. 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

The development work was stronger this year and more extensive. It is important when combining Unit 12 and 11 that a brief is generated for each unit. This enables learners to understand the demands and requirements of both units. 'Twinning' with Unit 13 was most successful when Unit 11 was designated a design brief and when strong emphasis on adherence to the client and the constraints allowed for a more extensive, often better developed response. Again, the evidence for two projects must be substantial.

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

There was some excellent planning documentation this year with many candidates showing good organisation skills and real independence. The logging of specialist working methods still needs to be better evidenced. This may be required by the 'client' to show production considerations and constraints, particularly in design work. This recording of methods, in the form of a process log, is good practice in all cases.

The use of technology and computer software applications had produced some very professional results and centres are to be commended for advancing this work forward as new technology becomes available.

d. Evaluation of ideas, planning and finished work

The range of evidence for this assessment strand still varies considerably but is improving overall. It is very clear that those 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 learners maintain close adherence to the requirements of the brief was highlighted. 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. There were some cases where formative evaluation was not correctly focused on intention, and summative evaluation not sufficiently focused on fitness for purpose. Assessment in these cases was often lenient.

6908, 6909 and 6910 The Portfolio Units

6908 Unit 8: Personal and Portfolio Development and Progression

Assessment strand 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, personal statements, CV's etc. has continued in most centres. Some centres also presented additional evidence through videos, logs and detailed witness statements, especially relating to individual and group presentations. This practice is encouraged.

Some centres, particularly those who have come out of accreditation were not as thorough in their presentation of evidence and as a result evidence needed to be requested and located.

Assessment strand b – Portfolio presentation techniques

A wide range of portfolio presentation techniques was seen including e-portfolios, online blogs and use of websites and social media. This ability to present a portfolio of work in different formats to different audiences is greatly encouraged; however centres need to ensure all relevant evidence is easily accessible to moderators. Centres may want to consider greater use of screen grabs and printouts of online content to help support this assessment strand.

Assessment strand c – Identifying and pursuing progression goals

It was encouraging to see that many candidates had achieved a progression goal.

Generally there was a wider range of progression routes explored with many candidates producing detailed and alternative progression plans that considered the world of work and Apprenticeships as well as Higher and Further Education courses.

6909 Unit 9: Contextual References

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

Although the majority of contextual references remain in the category of Fine Art, there was evidence of an increase in breath to include more references of contemporary craft and design, and both western and non-western sources this year.

When research was closely linked to the learners own work and related to their chosen pathways it had encouraged a greater understanding of the context of the work referenced. Equally, engagement with live work, often provoked a more enthusiastic and personal response which aided understanding of more complex issues.

Lower achievers continue to need support with their research and may benefit from using a centre devised framework to encourage more analytical comments.

Centres need to ensure that they consider both the range *and* understanding of context when assigning marks for assessment strand a, and not to over emphasise the quantity of references.

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

Many candidates recorded and presented information on the use of visual language in the work of others through annotated visual responses and written responses across the entire A2 portfolio, along with the presentation of a separate extended illustrated study.

Some centres chose to present an 'integrated' extended illustrated study, and in those cases the evidence for this unit was, at times, more difficult to locate.

Again, when learners were given the opportunity to engage with live work for example through visits to galleries and open studios, the analysis tended to be more in-depth, independent and perceptive.

Assessment strand 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. When studies were linked to Unit 11 topics and focused on candidates chosen pathways this allowed for better explanations of connections between the learners' own work and the work of others. Some extended studies were more superficial and although there was less focus on biographical detail this year, the analytical comments often lacked depth with little explanation of the use of references to inform the learners' own work.

Well focused evaluations ensured the candidates commented and explained the influences and connections between their own work and the work of others. In weaker portfolios, evidence of learners using references in their own work and explaining connections was generally more visually implicit across the portfolio.

Centres are reminded that there is an opportunity for learners to be assessed on Quality of Written Communication (QWC) in assessment strand c.

6910 Unit 10: Professional Practice

Assessment strand a. Investigation and analysis of professional practice

Although evidence was often presented in a folder alongside Unit 8, the best examples were carefully catalogued and indexed to highlight evidence locations both for each Unit and for individual strands. In some centres there was a wider range of professional practices explored this year in a range of different ways, for example through interviews, workshops, work-experience and business reports. Other centres that lacked such a considered delivery often had gaps in evidence. These gaps sometimes related to an entire strand and other times were just very difficult to locate due to the presentation of evidence.

The best evidence was generated when local artists and designers were invited in to centres to demonstrate or talk about their work. This provided the opportunities for learners to engage with and report on the work of a practitioner and to gain a greater understanding of their day-to-day working life, experiences and challenges.

Assessment strand b. Application and development of professional practice in own work

Evidence of the application of professional practice in the learners own work was found across the entire portfolio and had generally improved this year through the greater inclusion of witness statements, reviews, and reports etc. Where candidates had engaged directly with a practitioner either through workshops or placements there was evidence of this having a positive impact on the learners approach to their own practice.

Delivery teams need to take every opportunity available to extend study and application of professional practice through visiting practitioners, visits to practitioners, availability of case studies, video, film, or internet information on practitioners.

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

Log sheets and annotations in sketchbooks made up the bulk of the evidence for this criterion, although many candidates had a large amount of printouts relating to both health and safety and other legislation.

Sometimes the information was relevant but more often this wasn't specifically related back to Art and Design practice. Some candidates highlighted pertinent sections and the stronger candidates had annotations that showed more of an understanding of the language used. Evidence of genuine understanding was strongest when related to artist workshops and interviews.

Assessment strand d. Appropriate standards of professional working

Again evidence for this strand was found across the learner's entire portfolio, in particular in the organisation and care taken with the presentation of work.

As much of the evidence for this strand develops from personal interaction between student and peers and student and tutor; evidence via witness statements, reviews, assessment and self-assessment documentation (with evidence of responding to feedback) is crucial.

Careful planning and time management when working to a brief, demonstrating an ability to manage a workload efficiently; showing commitment, adhering to health and safety guidelines and meeting deadlines is all part of the evidence required for this strand.

6912, 6913, 6914 The Optional Units

6912 Unit 12: Fine Art

Assessment strand a. Recording of experiences or information to develop intentions

There was often an imbalance of primary and secondary sources used and a degree of confusion in some centres over the difference; for example images found on the internet incorrectly labelled as primary evidence. Moderators noted that there was often a predominance of photographic recording and limited evidence of recording through other methods, for example: drawing, annotations, sound recording, video, model-making etc. Some centres had set a topic or theme and provided a brief, others had encouraged candidates to select their own titles. Work was more successful when students worked to a brief with appropriate constraints, which encouraged more creative and innovate responses rather than responding to just a title alone where intentions were sometimes unclear.

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

This Unit offered learners the opportunity to extend work with materials and techniques and allowed for the introduction of new skills with which to develop ideas. The evidence often showed work that was developed with increasing independence, but this was often determined by the quality of the brief. There was evidence of the use of more combinations of materials, processes and technologies especially in printmaking, photography and

Photoshop. There were however, a number of learners that had explored a very limited range of ideas or had consolidated ideas too early. This was not always reflected in the centres assessment decisions.

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

The ability to effectively analyse and refine work was often dependent on skills that the learner had developed in the AS year, particularly in the work for Unit 6 or Units 6 and 7. The evidence clearly showed that this refinement was essential for the successful realisation of intentions.
On the whole a very broad and personally devised range of topics was seen by moderators and fine art outcomes included painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography, installation and film.

A minority of centres presented a project with a Design approach as opposed to a Fine Art approach, although this was less common than in previous years.

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

Learners that had worked to an appropriate Fine Art brief and had gathered feedback from others, e.g. the audience or viewer, were better able to evaluate and discuss the creative 'success' of the work against their original intentions. Some centres used an evaluation framework that was useful to maintain an appropriate focus.

Many centres continue to integrate the work of Unit 12 with other Units, especially Unit 11. In some centres where this was carefully planned and adequate time was allocated and the approach was successful; allowing for more extensive and in-depth project work. However, where Unit 11 work was cited as the source for the majority of evidence, the body of work did not always have the depth of evidence required to fulfil the requirements of both Units and as a result limited the candidate's potential to achieve marks in the higher bands.

6913 Unit 13: Design

Assessment strand a. resolving the needs of a brief to develop Intentions

Topics and briefs were very varied and whilst some centres encourage candidates to work to the same centre-devised brief, others encouraged a self-devised brief. A few centres worked to a live brief, some in collaboration with large organisations such as The Royal Opera House and the Victoria & Albert Museum. A wider variety of design was explored this year including set design, advertising, costume, fashion, illustration, product and graphic design.

The best evidence demonstrated a thorough analysis of the brief; consideration of target audience/market and client's needs as well as any constraints e.g. budget and production limitations.

Assessment strand b. Development of a range of ideas in response to a Brief

Generally there was a wider range of design ideas explored but this was very much dependent on the quality of the brief and the time allocated to this unit. Development was more successful when candidates frequently revisited the brief and constraints through analysis of client and target audience feedback, questionnaires and project reviews to inform and develop ideas further.

Assessment strand c. Production and presentation of a design solution

Some very strong and sophisticated design solutions were seen especially from learners working to a live brief. Appropriate production methods were selected and generally the presentation of the outcome/s was highly professional and in an appropriate format for their client and showing strong application of a professional working approach and a high level of skill, particularly in digital manipulation.

For some learners the refinement of ideas and presentation of a solution was sometimes disappointing and obvious, suggesting perhaps a lack of time for the work at this stage.

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

Weaker evaluations of working to a brief continue to focus on how the work was produced rather than discussing the potential and effectiveness of the developed idea in relation to the brief and the client's needs.

Generally the quality of evaluations of working to a brief (including evaluations of Unit 11) had improved as a result of stronger devised briefs where appropriate constraints had encouraged more innovative responses and intentions were clearly identified and revisited frequently.

Supporting evidence from other units, especially Unit 11 where learners work to a brief, select a client and produce a detailed project proposal often enabled more in-depth coverage of the requirements for this Unit, in turn allowing candidates to access higher mark bands.

6914 Unit 14: Multimedia

Assessment strand a. A record of information to develop intentions

Carefully considered centre devised multimedia briefs enabled learners to identify their intentions and record ideas through approaches including but not limited to, story boards, photography and video.

The evidence of the documentation of computer editing processes in the form of screen grabs has improved, but still needs to be generated and more extensively and carefully logged in some cases. It is recommended that wherever possible, all digital work should be additionally recorded in a cross platform permanent way e.g. as JPEG's, PDF's or printed hard copies.

Assessment strand b. Development of multimedia ideas by combining technology media processes

The work for this unit was digital and included photography, video editing, animation, PowerPoint presentation and web design.

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

Work was presented in a variety of formats, from digital photographs to video with some of the strongest responses remaining in animation.

Assessment strand d. Evaluate the creative potential and effectiveness of the outcome

Generally evaluations of outcomes (especially when provided with a framework) contained some effective discussions on the creative potential and effectiveness of the developed idea, however, weaker evidence continues to present evaluations that solely focus on describing the process.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx