GCE

Applied Art and Design

Advanced GCE **A2 H413/H613**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H013/H213**

OCR Report to Centres June 2015

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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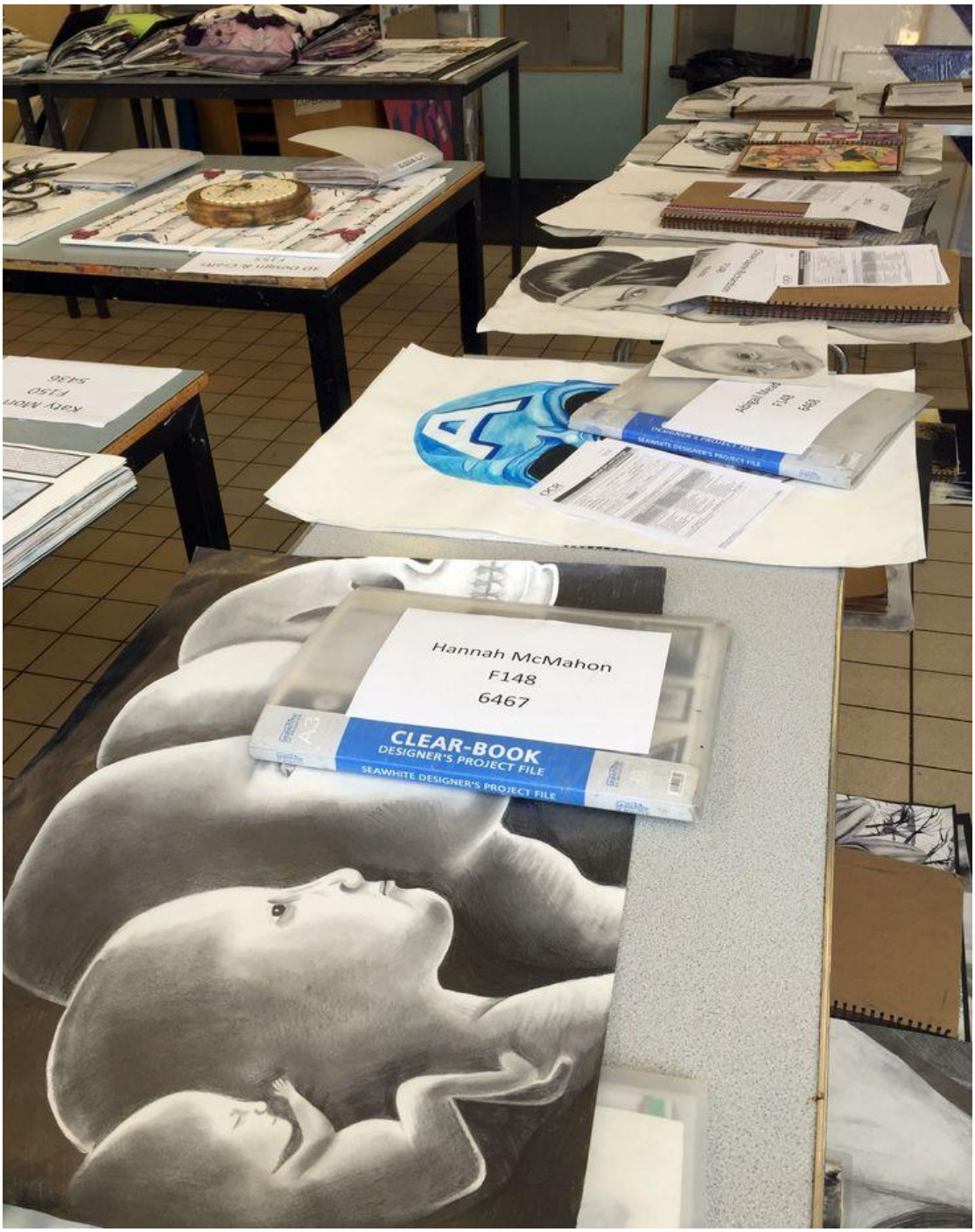
Overview



General Comments

Centres continue to be enthusiastic about this Award and they have proved their commitment by promoting it to a new cohort. Again, they have willingly released work for OCR's use for Standardisation and Award purposes. Centres have also been very co-operative about arranging visits and exhibiting work. Work was well presented in quiet rooms, put aside for the sole use of the moderator. Nearly all work was displayed according to the OCR instructions, Unit by Unit, and in rank order, this made the moderation process run more smoothly. There was a general feeling of celebrating candidates' achievements.

Shape
Pattern
Perspective
Depth
Portrait
Colour
Landscape
Pointillism

Centres and candidates must ensure that the work to be moderated is placed in the correct discrete units, even though the course may have been delivered holistically. Centres are also reminded that they should send in their forecast grades.

The administrative procedures went relatively smoothly, although it is important that Centres realise the importance of sending the correct documentation to moderators prior to their visit - moderators require the following:

- **MSI Forms** (Please check that these are correctly filled in and correlate with the Centre Assessment Forms).
- **Centre Assessment Forms GCW232/232A** relating to each candidate and Unit entered. It is recommended that Centres use the Interactive Summary Assessment Forms in order to reduce arithmetical errors.
- **Centre Authentication Forms CCS160** - one to cover AS units entered and a separate one for A2 units. It is important that Centres realise that the moderation process cannot take place unless the moderator has received the Centre Authentication Forms.
- Centres should ensure that candidates have labelled all their work, as it can be very time consuming labelling work that is to be forwarded to OCR for use at the Award meeting.

This Specification is finishing in June 2017 and teachers are recommended to refer to the specialisms and areas of study in the new "AS" and A Level Art and Design Specifications. There are seven specialisms. Teachers are encouraged to attend Professional Development courses for these new Specifications. If there are any queries about Professional Development, then please contact OCR Customer Care or check the OCR website: www.ocr.co.uk.

This Art and Design Specification suite has encouraged candidates to be more confident, analytical, apply technical skills and become involved with problem solving and lateral thinking. This focus has encouraged them to become fully engaged in talking to clients and understanding the implications of a brief. **Presentation is a very important part of the vocational aspect of this award** and it is vital that candidates are made aware that all work produced should be client-focused or for a target audience. Presentation of work in this session was the best yet; the majority of Centres had made improved efforts in displaying candidates' work**. It is also encouraging to report that a number of candidates have gained direct entry into University with their GCE Applied work because of the range and depth of their portfolios and their ability to talk confidently about their work.**

A CD of exemplar material and best practice is available from OCR. This has proved to be very informative and helpful to Centres and candidates.

Centres are reminded that if they encounter any problems with lost, damaged or missing work that they should contact their Examinations Officer immediately.

AS Portfolio Units (F140, F141, F144–F148)

Where candidates had fully engaged with the vocational aspects of these Units, they had performed extremely well. Good research and well-annotated sketchbooks were seen, although some candidates would benefit from using word processing. Many candidates are using digital cameras to record visits and to record for drawing purposes. A variety of media, styles and techniques had been used, and it was pleasing to see that some candidates explored and fully developed their ideas, providing some excellent analysis and evaluations. The more able candidates were demonstrating on-going evaluation and informed contextual links.

Objective 1: Applying knowledge and understanding of others' practice.

Project briefs devised by Centres frequently produced excellent starting points allowing candidates to explore and develop a wide range of skills, processes and techniques.

Relevant artistic references were seen in the majority of work, with aesthetic qualities appropriately informing intentions.

Depth of understanding was not always evident at the lower end of Centres' orders of merit, but this generally coincided with the overall quality of candidates' work. Some candidates were failing to analyse work as it progressed with the result that it was not always sufficiently well-refined or technically accomplished.

Vocational awareness provided a firm foundation for candidates to focus their ideas and negotiate clients' needs.

Objective 2: Applying skills, techniques and understanding.

Personal styles were often well developed but candidates did not always possess the technical skills to effectively realise ideas.

Some recording was of an outstanding quality, but this was not always consistent throughout submissions. Some candidates opted to use secondary sources where primary sources would have been a better option.

In some cases technical skills lacked a fluency of understanding and a sensitivity of the nature of materials used.

The rapidly expanding digital and media technology has had a positive impact on the way in which candidates record. However, there is still the requirement to edit and refine materials in order to better inform and realise outcome(s).

Some projects often contained a large quantity of work, which did little to improve the quality of the submission.

Outcomes were seen to be increasingly well-presented and vocational awareness was evident throughout the majority of submissions.

Objective 3: Analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Fitness for purpose was generally well documented and some candidates made perceptive decisions for new directions in their work.

Analysis and evaluation, both visual and written, should be an integral part of submissions. Less able candidates would have benefited from a more sustained focus and analysis of their own and others' work.

Candidates' work had obviously benefited from looking at the work of other artists, craftspeople and designers with many candidates making strong contextual links.

F140 2D and 3D Skills, Materials and Techniques

Where Centres had made their candidates fully aware of the vocational aspect of this Unit, most had performed extremely well by producing a wide range of personal and creative artwork.

Centres are beginning to realise that it takes time to develop skills and it is important to keep candidates well motivated with effective time management plans.

Some Centres apparently encouraged their candidates to investigate a range of skills and a number of techniques, but they often did not go on to produce quality outcomes as the work frequently lacked refinement and resolution.

3D work was often a token gesture in some Centres, with some basic outcomes of simple ceramic models and paper sculptures, which did not inform ideas, intentions or outcomes.

Overall, work for this Unit was well presented with candidates becoming more aware that **presentation is a priority when dealing with clients or target audience**. Some good research and well-annotated sketchbooks were in evidence, although some candidates would benefit from using word processing and digital media. The over use of gel pens and poorly hand written notes does little to enhance personal submissions.

F141 Communication and Meaning through Visual Language

This Unit was designed to act as a bridge between Unit 1: 2D and 3D Skills and Unit 3: Preparing and Working to a Brief, but the skills developed in visual language and communication will be used as the foundation for the other Units.

Where courses had been well taught and structured, candidates had used critical references and research to develop work effectively.

Vocational awareness was apparent in most candidates' submissions with the more able having a consistent approach and making regular references to their original brief and modifying their work as it progresses.

Visits to galleries, museums and the local area were often very influential in informing project briefs and practical outcomes.

Some candidates had used secondary source material very constructively but others had used ‘cut and paste’ from magazines and the Internet merely as ‘padding’ and this approach did little to inform the development of their work.

Annotation was often used in sketchbooks and presentation sheets and this had informed the work of the more able candidates, but it tended to be more basic and limited for the less able candidates. Digital technologies are providing candidates with new and exciting opportunities to record ideas and observations.

There was a tremendous variety, range of media, styles and techniques throughout this Unit and it was pleasing to see candidates explore and fully develop their ideas with some excellent analysis and evaluations. Candidates had also used their digital media skills well and these were evident in the refinement of ideas and in the presentation of outcomes.

Many Centres are now using contacts with local businesses to better inform candidates' knowledge and understanding, which had a very positive impact on the range and nature of work produced.

Unit F142 Preparing and Working to a Brief

This Unit operates vocationally focused, themed scenarios and project brief outlines set by OCR. Candidates are free to work in ways that allow then to demonstrate their particular skills in line with their chosen specialist pathway. Project brief outlines are provided for candidates to discuss with their clients (teachers) to ensure that proposals are realistic and within the scope of available resources. Each themed scenario and project brief is 'live' from September to May and can be delivered to suit particular course planning arrangements within Centres.

A new themed scenario is sent out to Centres each May for the following academic year and can be viewed online at the OCR website.

There is no required time limit for preparatory research to plan and produce the final outcome/solution to the unit project brief. However, candidates must meet the deadline for presentation to the 'client', which is set by the teacher.

Moderation revealed that the project brief outlines had been adapted in a variety of creative ways by candidates, with a range of outcomes being seen. The brief/scenario set this year 'Historical House' had shown that candidates had produced a variety of outcomes/solutions from paintings to fashion accessories, with a wide range of media and materials used.

Candidates had used the theme to develop their skills in visual communication, with the vocational aspect being at the forefront of the majority of work seen. Initial research and investigation was generally well presented, the artist/designer connections were more evident in informing intentions than previous years. In particular connections to specific fashion designers and interior design companies linking current trends that informed candidates' work was seen.

The levels of skills seen were varied, often showing an extensive range of investigations. Successful candidates assessed in the top mark bands were seen to produce wider range of initial research, and included recordings from both primary and secondary sources that were often both innovative and original. A lack of consistency in practical skills and response to the work of an artist, designer or craftsperson also appeared to hinder the success of final outcomes.

Successful candidates, however, assessed in the top mark band were seen to produce a wider range of initial research and there were often both innovative and original. Practical outcomes often highlighted developing personal styles and strong vocational connections. Centres are reminded that a professional, client-friendly presentation of research and development materials that clearly relates to a brief's summative outcome greatly reinforces submissions.

Unit F143 The Creative Process

All candidates are given scenarios and starting points for this examined Unit.

The vocational and applied focus of this Unit is at the core of the set paper, stimulating candidates to respond in professional ways using the creative process. Preliminary work, including relevant research, investigation, exploration and analysis should be recorded and presented appropriately at given stages by the client/teacher. There is no set time limit for the preliminary or final work, but the candidates must meet the set deadlines.

Moderation revealed that the project brief had been adapted in creative ways by candidates, with a wide range of outcomes being seen. Several Centres also commented that the same theme had been further adapted and extended in other "AS" Units. Candidates used the topic to develop their skills in visual communication, with the vocational aspect being at the forefront of the majority of submissions. Initial research and investigation were generally well presented, often displaying strong designer/artist connections, which had informed personal outcomes. These included film making, special effects and computer gaming. The level of skills displayed was varied, but often showing an extensive range of investigations, which were frequently informed and often well resolved. This Unit had also provided candidates the opportunity to engage in a wide range of digital media, which was often highly creative and well controlled.

Successful candidates assessed in the top mark bands were seen to produce a wider range of initial research and included recordings from both primary and secondary sources; these were often both innovative and original work. Ideas were frequently evaluated and refined as an on-going process and this had informed personal directions. Practical outcomes often highlighted developing personal styles and strong vocational connections.

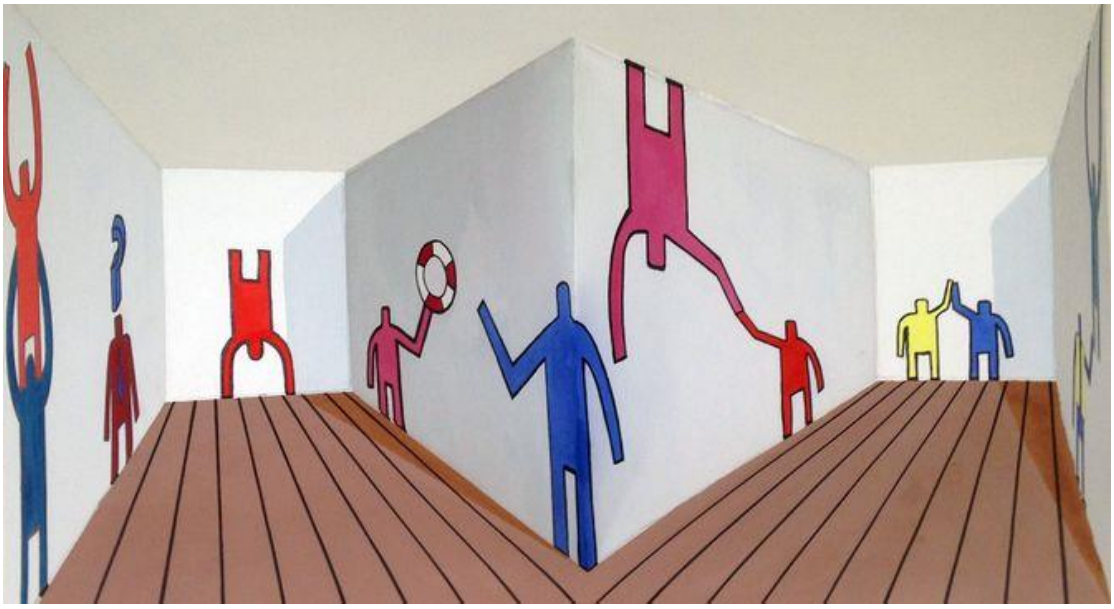
Centres are reminded that a professional, client-friendly presentation, displaying a high level of research and development, greatly reinforces submissions.

Units F144, F145, F146, F147 and F148

There were very few entries in this session. The nature of work seen in Centres generally reflected the nature of work seen in the earlier portfolio Units by adopting the same working methodology and good practice with a focus on recording and realisation of outcome(s).

F149 Professional Practice and Progression

Many Centres moderated in this session appeared to be clear and confident in the delivery of this Unit. Teaching experience gained over many previous sessions has allowed Centres to thoroughly understand the importance of this A2 examined Unit and its overall value to the qualification.



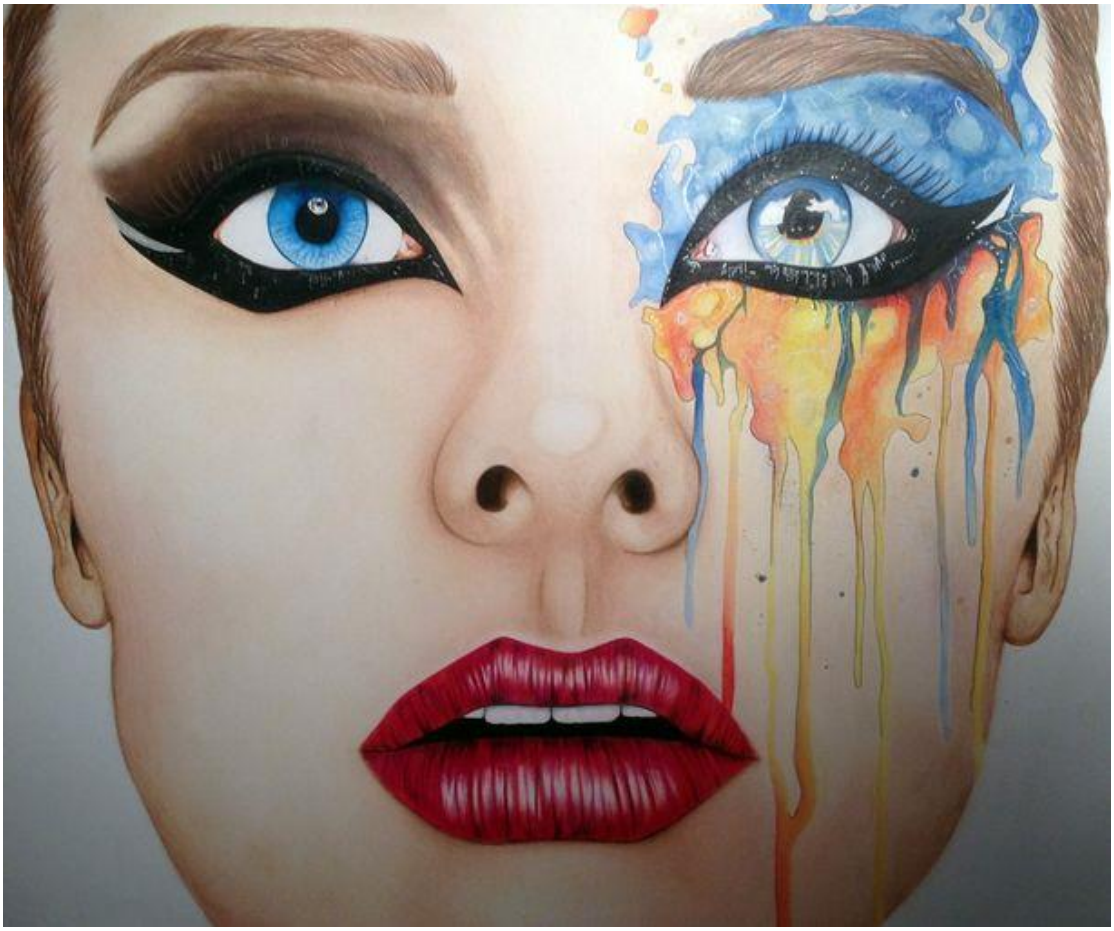
In most of the submissions presented the 'Statement of Intent' was evident and was thoughtfully prepared. It was observed that this often produced a focused pathway of research that led forward to a successful creative project. Some candidates were, in fact, found to be using the 'Statement of Intent' format in preparing project briefs for their other A2 chosen portfolio units.

Candidates sometimes selected a creative project that related to their own particular skills and favoured specialisms. In these instances the projects displayed showed vocational awareness. Results seen at moderation were often very creative and of a high technical standard. Project work frequently displayed good levels of skill; final outcomes being realised with care and confidence.

Final evaluation and analysis was generally clear and meaningful, confirming the candidates' understanding of the purpose of this Unit. Some improvement was again noticed in the quality of presentation. However, presentation continues to be the weakest element seen as part of candidate submissions. Lack of care in the preparation and final presentation did, in some cases, not show a candidate's work to its best advantage.

A2 Portfolio Units (F150–F157)

This was another successful series for many candidates who entered for the A2 Portfolio Units. Overall, the work displayed creativity and a personal response, underpinned by strong vocational contexts. All Centres carried out the administrative tasks successfully and submitted paperwork on time.



Candidates generally presented their work well, either on mounted sheets, sketchbooks, plastic sleeved folders, display boards, 3D installations and digital media. It was clear that many had gone to some considerable effort to present work in a professional manner. There were, however, candidates who had submitted work with little regard to presentation, which was often reflected in the quality of creative thinking throughout the submissions. Whilst there is not a prescribed form of presentation, development of research and ideas needs to demonstrate **effective planning and good quality presentation skills in a vocational context**. This was often reflected in the variable quality of the written word. Most candidates' submissions were, however, confident, having clear meaning and appropriate structure in project briefs, annotations and evaluations to enhance meaning and clarify ideas.

The most successful submissions displayed extensive research and investigations into both historical and contemporary imagery, with candidates reviewing and refining their ideas in relation to the vocational context. There was clear differentiation between AS and A2 in most Centres, particularly in the skill levels shown in planning and the production and presentation of the final outcomes.

The most popular Units presented for assessment were F150 (Decorative Imagery) and F158 (Fine Art). Generally, the work displayed vitality, creativity and a strong personal response in a vocational context. The most successful submissions demonstrated a clearly defined project brief, which was reviewed, refined and evaluated as the practical work developed.

Assessment Objective 1: Applying knowledge and understanding of others' practice:

All Centres had encouraged candidates to investigate the work of others, some using trips to galleries and museums, some through visiting artists, craftsmen and workshops while for others more contemporary starting points emerged from an exploration of the local area or community. This often provided the basis for personal submissions that were well focused, critically informed, creatively developed and maturely presented.

Annotations in sketchbooks and mounted sheets demonstrated a level of understanding of the context of the work. There were, however, considerable variations in the quality of presentation and Centres are reminded of the importance
of presenting work for a professional audience. The use of the Internet featured prominently in many submissions and it was pleasing to note that candidates were selecting and processing information as an aid for their own work rather than simply downloading ad hoc.

There were many examples of candidates who were critically analysing the work of others and using it to inform the development of personal artwork, which was regularly reviewed, refined and evaluated. This synthesis often resulted in outcomes that were either confident or mature. Links with local business and the community provided many candidates with a strong vocational focus.

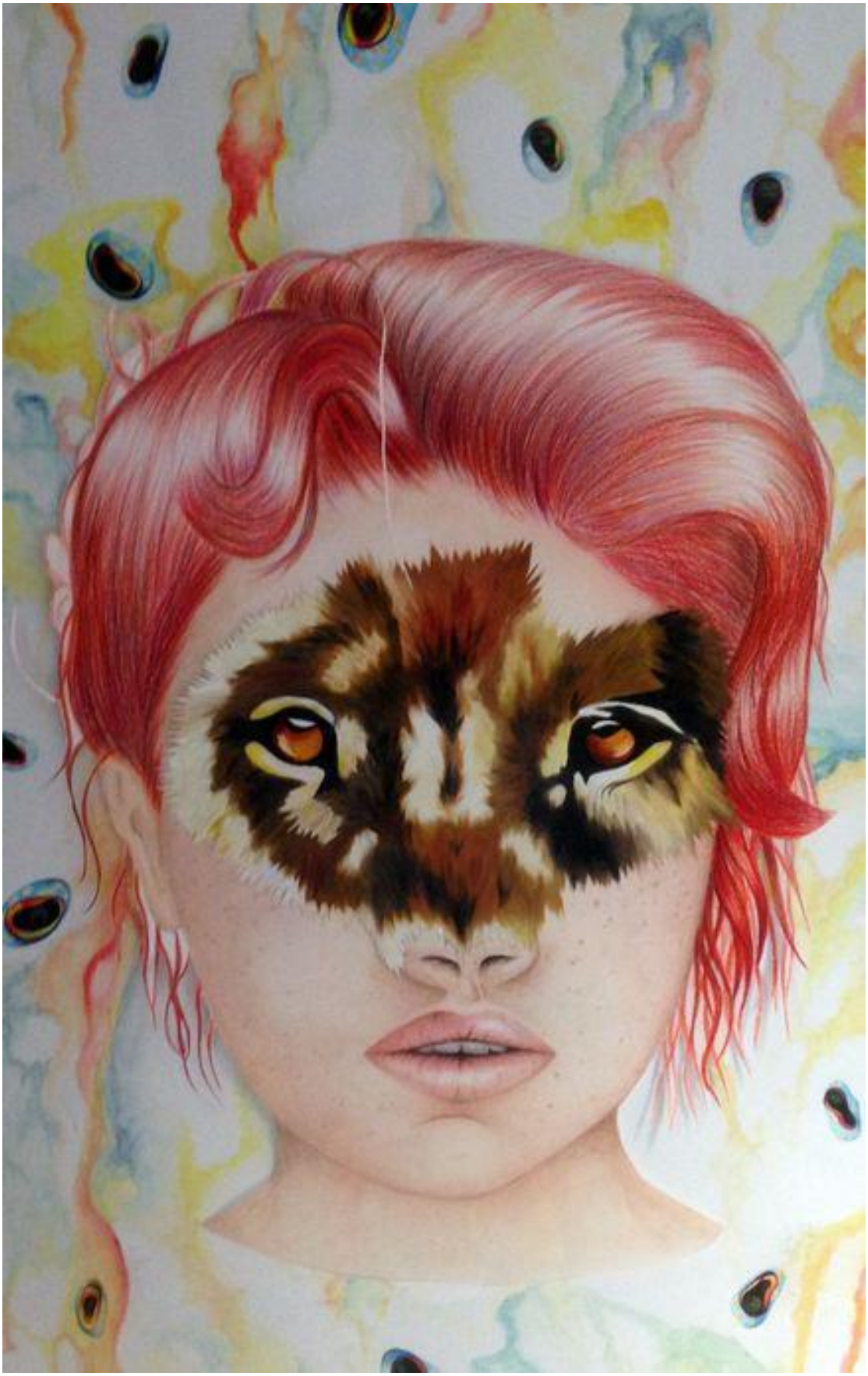
Less successful candidates presented haphazard research, which was superficial and failed to inform development. Reference material was gathered, but did not provide inspiration for the production of well-planned or high quality outcomes, nor did it show implicit links to possible uses and locations necessary in this vocational qualification. More evidence and clarity of intentions with planning should be evident within the work. Good practice enhances submissions.

Assessment Objective 2: Applying skill, techniques and understanding:

Some, however, relied too heavily on secondary sources, often resulting in direct transcriptions of borrowed material.

There were many examples of candidates working at a confident or mature level producing well-resolved mixed media outcomes as final pieces that were presented at a high technical standard. Successful candidates had developed a personal style, modifying and refining ideas as the work progressed. These qualities were embedded within individual submissions rather than just the outcome(s). The use of Digital Media frequently enhanced submissions by articulating and manipulating the candidate's own work. This was more in evidence this year. The less successful candidates tended to transcribe a single image, with no attempt at editing, refining or exploring creative potential. They would also have benefited by applying critical skills and practical techniques.

The application of skills varied immensely between Centres and this resulted in Assessment Objective 2 being too generously marked. Some candidates documented their work as it progressed through the use of photographs and this was particularly helpful when working on 3D, fashion, textile pieces or mixed media presentations.



Candidates in most Centres were encouraged to explore wide range of media and processes, including traditional mark making approaches and digital media. Many candidates displayed high levels of skill, particularly when working from direct observation.

Assessment Objective 3: Analysis, synthesis and evaluation:

There were many examples of excellent annotation, which was analytical and displayed candidates' thinking. Many had used an appropriate technical vocabulary, which aided in reviewing and informing development. Those candidates who were less able were simply describing what they had done with little or no critical insight. Centres still need to advise candidates with illegible handwriting to word process their annotation and to be more aware of presentation for a client. This is also an area where some candidates need to be reminded that they are making professional presentations and that their work is viewed as a whole. It was pleasing to see digital media being used effectively by many candidates, who were producing some creative and professional outcomes, either supporting or as part of their personal artwork. The most successful candidates had concluded with a visualisation of their own design in a vocational context. This ensured ongoing analysis and evaluation as an integral part of their work, leading to logical and well-considered final outcomes.

F150 Decorative Imagery

The gathering of research and resource material was very successful, especially where there was not an over-reliance on downloaded Internet imagery. Work was presented in sketchbooks, loose-leaf folders, A2 sheets, display boards or digital presentations.

Outcomes were effective where candidates had researched and developed ideas and insights, applying a range of technical skills confidently or maturely. Submissions ranged from 2D pattern making to the production of T-shirts, screen-printed designs, stitched fabrics, ceramic ware, bags, labels, 3D packages and digital artwork.

F151 Multi Media

This was often embedded into many candidates' outcomes as well as being a discrete Unit. There was generally a great deal of experimentation with the more successful candidates exploring the nature of materials and vocational contexts within personal ideas. Most candidates had made copious study boards showing the development of their work as it progressed and had skilfully controlled materials and digital techniques with high levels of creativity.

The more successful candidates had used first hand recording as the basis for their work and had translated more traditional 2D forms of recording into a wide range of mark-making techniques, including film, video, stitching, layering and photomontage.

F152 Spatial Design

There were some excellent submissions on mounted sheets and computer generated imagery displaying the planning of ideas and methods of 3D construction. Successful candidates were often translating personal first-hand recording into a wide range 3D outcomes, which displayed a good understanding of human interaction and the nature of the materials.

F153 Fashion Design

Generally, candidates wanting to further their study in Fashion undertook this Unit. There was a great deal of evidence of supportive planning, based on themes and ideas ranging from historical to social starting points.

Successful candidates responded well to their chosen brief displaying excellent research, recording skills, ideas and development in sketchbooks and mounted sheets. This year also saw an increase in the use digital technology in informing personal outcomes.

A wide range of contrasting fabrics, dyed, stitched paper and a wide range of textile techniques had been used to produce vibrant outcomes.

F154 Graphic Design Specialisms

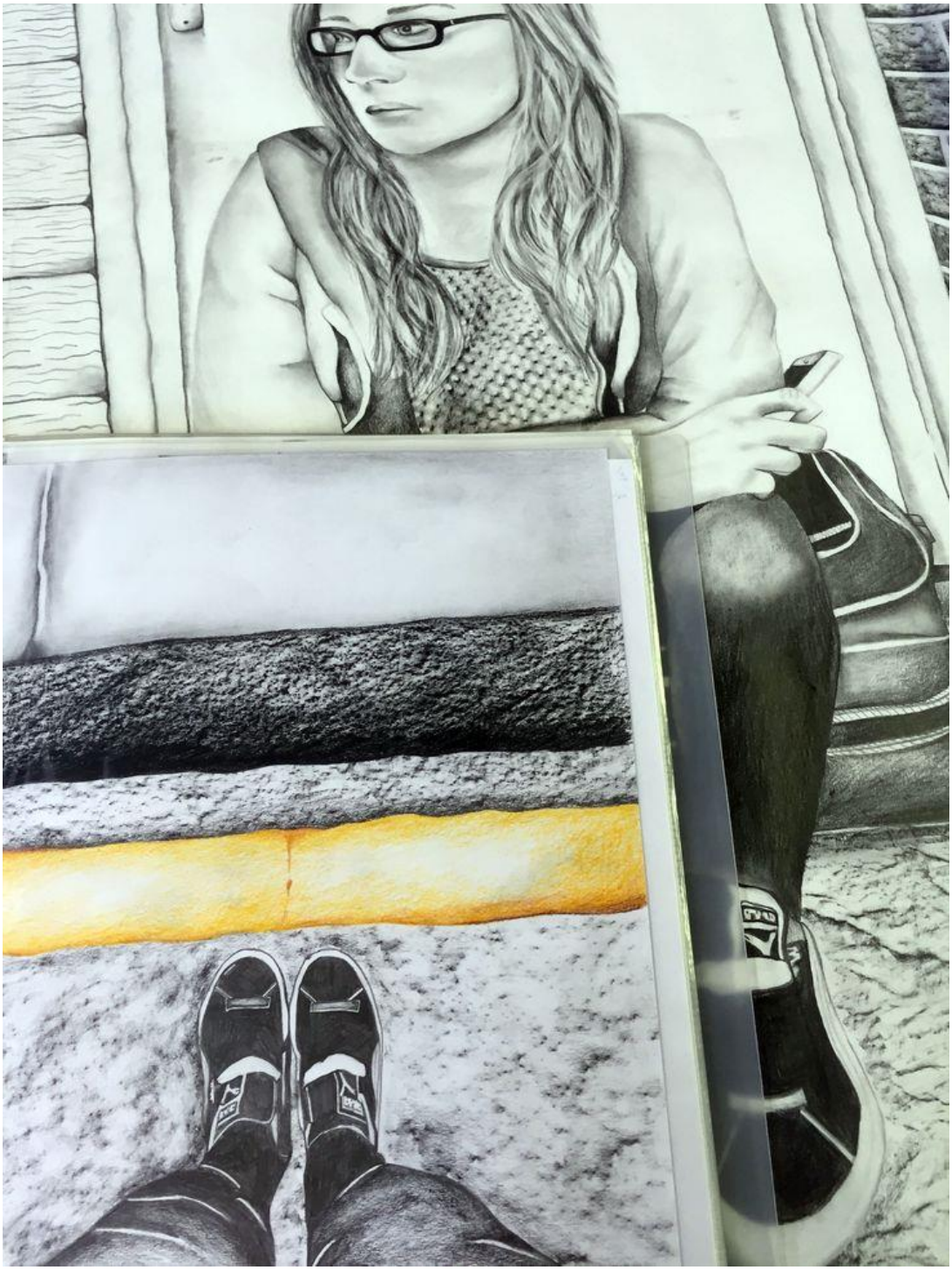
There were many successful candidate submissions, which displayed confidence in computer manipulation in the development and presentation of work. Presentation was of a high standard with some excellent quality outcomes. Candidates showed a strong client focus and vocational understanding with ideas being fully explored and developed. A great deal of first-hand recording, executed and developed in a variety of media, underpinned submissions.

F155 3D Design

A wide range of materials and techniques was used within this Unit, with a number of highly personal installations with a notable improvement in making skills. Work was again informed by first-hand recording, which had been developed into a wide variety of outcomes, including the extensive use of fabrics, sheet metal, found materials, paper, rubbish and wood. Candidates had produced lively and vibrant designs, which had been informed by the nature of materials and client needs. Work was generally reviewed as it progressed, enabling candidates to produce work that was sustained and confidently realised.

F156 Fine Art

The more successful candidates exhibited strong vocational links showing confident or mature skill levels in presentation. Successful submissions showed increased awareness of historical, social and contemporary influences. There were, however, variable results in some work with a lack of appropriate recording, painting and technical skills. It was clear that initial studies had not been developed with sufficient rigour to enable sustained development, progression or realisation. These skills should be embedded throughout the entire submission and not just the final outcome.



Candidates need to carefully consider scale and time constraints carefully. Large scale can compromise skills. Small work can be effective. Deadlines and time management need careful consideration.

Presentations often reflected the vocational links, with some work being shown in site-specific locations through the skilful use of digital media.

A great deal of work was based on artist research, focused in a vocational context. A number of candidates produced work with more than one outcome in a variety of media, with annotated sketchbooks or sheets displaying success through achievement in the Assessment Objectives.

It was also encouraging to see many Centres providing first hand recording opportunities in the form of visits, life drawing classes, visits, tours and working within the local community.

F157 Textiles

The quality of submissions often reflected individual Centre skills. Centres with specialist textile teachers were generally very successful in delivering this A2 Unit.

It was encouraging to see candidates recording from direct observation, which was confident or mature in the more able candidates' work and evidenced in sketchbooks, study sheets and digital media. These skills underpinned the work of the more successful candidates. This fully informed the development of outcomes, which were executed with flair, skill and creativity.

Candidates were inventive and produced some visually stimulating work based on stitching, quilting and felt making, which was vocationally strong and well presented.

The best submissions displayed extensive research and investigations into both historical and contemporary imagery, with candidates achieving a clear differentiation in quality and depth between AS and A2. This was particularly evident in the skill levels shown in planning, development and the final outcome(s).

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