



Pearson
Edexcel

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary
in Art and Design
(8AD0/8FA0/8GC0/8PY0/8TD0/8TE0)

Component 1 Personal Investigation

and

Component 2 Externally Set Assignment

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Introduction

This report is a comprehensive overview of the performance of candidates in the GCE Art and Design Advanced Subsidiary 2019 series and is compiled from observations made nationally and internationally by the whole assessment team.

It is important therefore, that the practitioners who are delivering this qualification receive copies of it, and examination officers in centres relay it immediately to the relevant personnel, as it may help to inform their procedures for the 2020 examination series.

In this specification Centres can give their candidates the choice of:

- Completing a two-year linear A Level incorporating the AS level and using its work to supplement the A Level submission.
- Taking the stand-alone AS level at the end of the first year and then dropping it or change courses.
- Completing a full Linear A Level and not enter for AS at all (even though they may have started on an AS course).
- Completing an AS in either Year 12 or 13.
- Completing an AS over Years 12 and 13.
- Any combination of the above.

As stated last year, the AS qualification continues to provide a credible option for many centres. This is an interesting development as the debate as to its value and status continues. Many centres find it a highly motivational foundation for the A Level and capitalise on the fact that students finishing at the end of year 12 leave with a certificated qualification. Other centres are finding that the nature of a formal examination at the end of the first year of Sixth Form life keeps their more challenged learners focussed. It may be that its worth in practical subjects has more value than in others where it does not always provide such foundation skills. Certainly, in Art and Design many centres see its structured format for year 12 invaluable. It is slightly worrying then, that the current trend to enforce blanket, mandatory rulings to stop teaching AS across all subjects in centres, thwarts the intent of many art departments who may wish to retain AS Art and Design. It appears that many of these rulings are founded on economic concerns rather than the welfare of the candidates concerned. More worrying is that the current possible undermining and devaluing of the AS qualification, effectively negates the hard-won success of students achieving excellent grades in this qualification in the past.

As mentioned, each year it must be noted that the observations listed in this report are generic and must not be seen as lists of criticism or praise for individual centres. They have

been taken directly from the moderator's reports and collated and edited to avoid duplication. Single issues are not commented on, so the points raised have been made by several individual moderators from different National and International locations. They therefore form important trends that only need to be addressed if they are pertinent to your centre.

Feedback from the Principal Moderator's reports is invaluable in providing information for centre staff, to help them adapt and re-structure their course design and assessment strategies, embracing any developments or benefits of centre interpretations and delivery of the qualification.

Here are the observations apposite to each component, as reported by the Principal Moderators responsible for them.

Component 1

8AD0/01 – 8TE0/02

Overview

AS level Component 1 Personal Investigation is worth 50% of the qualification.

For this coursework component, candidates are required to:

- Generate practical work, ideas and research from sources.
- Explore media and processes, develop and refine ideas, and present outcome(s).
- Work from personal starting points.
- Create supporting studies and personal outcome(s).
- There is no requirement for a personal study at AS level.
- Practical outcome(s) and supporting studies are assessed together and the unit is marked out of 72.

Observations:

- Overall, the number of Centres offering the AS Qualification has fallen and there were less Centres and less candidates for all the Endorsed Titles. Art Craft and Design and Fine Art had the highest entries, followed by Photography and Textiles. Graphic Communication had a very small number of entries, whilst Three-Dimensional Design had none.
- Moderators reports mostly indicate that candidates are performing to a similar overall standard as in previous years.
- Coursework themes were, in most cases, appropriate, interesting and challenging. Often historic ESA themes had been used as starting points to positive ends. There is indeed a wide variation in how Centres engage their students for this Component. Some Centres are now looking keenly at the Edexcel online exemplar material and re-use the featured artists.
- Courses were constructed in many cases showing a real understanding of the process-based nature of the Specification.
- Most Centres that were visited, and most reported by the team, had responded well to covering the assessment objectives. Even weaker Centres were enabling candidates to address the AO's with confidence, thereby engendering a fluency and cohesiveness to the candidate's development. Moderators reported that the majority of Centres had engaged in the gathering of information and development of ideas with energy and relevance. Most of the candidates fully understood the purpose of visual research.

- The demise of the AS was regretted in those Centres that had built it as an integral part of their A Level Delivery.
- Many Centres commented on the apparent lack of drive in the first year of the two year A Level course, where they had candidates taking AS alongside those who were not. This was seen as a regressive step by them. Candidates in these Centres were not treating the internal mock examinations that replaced the AS qualification, with the same seriousness or rigour.
- Many candidates were seen to be enjoying the step up from GCSE and the freedoms offered by the AS course structure.
- Overseas Centres still find the AS qualification an excellent structure for laying down the foundation skills necessary for the candidates to carry on into A Level.

Component 2

8AD0/02 – 8TE0/02

Overview

AS level Component 2 Externally Set Assignment is worth 50% of the qualification.

The theme for Component 2 this year was “Journeys and Pathways”

Candidates are required to submit preparatory work and a final outcome(s) for this Component.

The timed period for the completion of the final outcome is 10 hours.

Observations:

- This component across all titles continues to be more independently executed than Component 1 and candidates tended to build on the coursework experience. In some examples the developing ideas were so very different to the subjects covered in the coursework that it appeared that the candidate had been let off the leash.
- In other examples candidates had continued with research and idea development that had clearly very strongly engaged them within their course work. Some Centres continue to encourage their candidates to continue with their component 1 enquiry, (if they felt they still had some mileage in the ideas and a strong personal interest) but with the ESA theme redirecting the ideas. In these Centres the submission appeared seamless as the ideas flowed from component 1 to 2 and with the higher achieving candidates a deeper level of enquiry emerged.
- Responses to the exam theme were varied from the less well performing candidates documenting their day to day travels, family holidays and the ageing process to more academic and in-depth approaches covering aspects of evolution, zoological and botanical lifecycles, political movements, psychological journeys and personal discoveries.
- Moderators noted some interesting examples, such as the candidate that traced the journey of Hansel and Gretel using footprints and shoes to illustrate and record a journey through a photographic landscape.
- It was observed that there still seems to be an unspoken rule that each student needs to explore a variety of ideas before they can choose one of these to develop. The spider-diagram/brainstorms are still a big feature in every sketchbook.

- Hundreds of possible avenues of exploration are of limited use. Invariably candidates spend so much time on their 'range of ideas' that they run out of any meaningful developmental time and then rush towards some kind of final outcome.
- It was reported that the opposite of this approach is to decide that they don't like any of their ideas and come up with something totally new, such as a photograph loosely connected to the theme that they then can copy.
- Moderators reported that the best submissions may have a few ideas in mind at the beginning but then they quickly choose the most suitable one and run with it, linking and learning from appropriate artists as they move through their development. The final outcome is well considered and builds on skills developed during Component 1.
- Final outcomes have been varied, but almost always very large or over ambitious. An example of this were the textile students who suddenly think they can make a garment or the graphics students who attempt an animation having had no previous experience of these processes.
- These are generalisations, however, as much of the AS work has been impressive and is obviously providing a very beneficial route for certain candidates.

General Assessment Observations

- Higher achieving candidates were again often placed in Level 6 rather than in Level 5.
- Weaker candidates were marked as emerging competent rather than basic or even limited, in order to enter them into the qualification.
- There was a consistent reluctance, across all Titles, to use Level 1 although the descriptors were clearly appropriate
- Centres that entered lower numbers, possibly because a candidate is leaving and cashing in, tended to have marks falling into the middle levels and were generally realistic.
- Moderators reported that over marking when it did occur was generally across the assessment objectives, but there were also patterns of over marking in AO1 where the level and depth of understanding and use of critical language had been over-marked along with the refinement of ideas.
- In Assessment Objective 2, there was some refinement of actual application of media, which was usually broad, but refinement of an idea again was slightly over-marked. This then obviously impacted on the level of performance in the outcomes, with subsequent consequences in Assessment Objective 4.
- Moderators are reporting that Centres at AS are now almost always using the performance calculator and it certainly seems to have had an impact on the accuracy of centre assessment.
- Exemplar materials should be used as a clear guide as to where Centres candidates work should be placed.
- In some centres there was a disparity in marking/internal moderation in some of the endorsements taught and although the work had all been standardised, there was clear evidence to suggest that staff members moderating work outside their own realm of experience did not apply the same rigour as they might with their own specialism.
- For AO2 Centre assessment does not always consider the degree to which review, and refinement are actually taking place. A 'diverse range of experimentation' needs to go hand in hand with an ability to 'extend, refine and recognise potential' to achieve the higher marks, as many centres appear to assess this AO based on quantity of experiments alone.

Summary

- Most centres visited that currently offer AS expressed their disappointment that the AS qualification is no longer on offer after 2020. Many have found that it has enabled them to keep their numbers high for A level recruitment
- In addition to this AS has enabled less focussed candidates to establish good, sound methods of research, idea development and refinement of recording skills. It has also facilitated good management practise and a focus through the ESA.
- Some centres have stated that they will continue to keep the AS delivery structure as it works so well for them when continuing with the linear A level. However, several moderators reported that centres who currently use AS have said they will need to move examination boards in order to maintain the integrity of their post 16 provision.
- Many of the International centres appeared not to be aware that the AS qualification was discontinuing. Other centres have said that notification could have been better disseminated.
- Many centres continue to use our Question Paper as a basis for their Coursework Unit with often much success.
- There is clearly a concern about the need for more exemplar work available online. Examples of every title and performance level, and there seems to be a consistent demand for face to face training with 'live' work available.
- It is very difficult to get out of school for attending Training. Training is an expensive business.
- Work presented by International Centres was variable in quality. Those Centres who cannot attend Training or those who have no access to the online events that we offer, have marking issues. In light of this some significant overmarking was in evidence.

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