Version 1.0

General Certificate of Education (A-level) Applied
June 2012

Applied Art and Design   AD01

(Specification
8511/8513/8516/8517/8519)

Unit 1: Investigation of 2D visual language

Report on the Examination

AD01 – Investigation of 2D visual language

Most centres were able to cover the 2D requirements of the unit, which has an emphasis on investigation and experimentation, often using a vocational brief as a stimulus, although a design proposal is not always necessary. The strap-line asks for 'vocationally considered work' and centres should interpret this in ways which best fit the centre's strengths. The work in this unit supports work in other AS units and is also the basis for progression to AD07 at A2, the 'Application and development of 2D visual language'.

Some very inventive experimental work was seen with a range of mark making techniques using varied media and technology. There was good use of visual language through experimentation as well as good observational drawing in many centres. Much of the work moderated was dynamic, bright, colourful and supported by wide ranging investigations and broad research.

Candidates have shown a very good standard of language in the work seen, with many astute and observant comments on their own work and the work of others. This good standard has been apparent in both formative and summative comments with promising analysis. Though not necessarily required, some candidates have provided useful summative evaluations that prove their language skills and good use of technical terms.

Photography and ICT are being increasingly used to record development of work as well as in a more creative and personal way. Many sketchbooks were populated with quality developments and improvements, which were aimed at several formal elements. There was also sound evidence of explorations of primary and secondary sources.

Centres have improved the quality of work for this unit and there was a good understanding of the specification. There were some interesting ways of tackling AD01 by combining units, usually with AD02, in a more holistic approach. Thematic approaches often worked well, with some centres linking AD01, AD02 and AD04. For many centres this holistic approach proved valuable although it is important to meet the strap-line requirements of each individual unit.

Centres should aim for a breadth of investigation and experimentation with materials, skills and techniques and a good variety of combined techniques, media and technology were seen in the investigations that candidates undertook. Development is not always a strong feature and some centres did not ensure that candidates were maximising their opportunities in developing their ideas and there was little work shown between research and final proposals. Some candidates spent time producing either a design proposal or in some cases a design outcome, (which is only required at A2) when these are not a requirement of this unit. They would have been better directed to have focused more on developing ideas and experimenting with media and techniques.

Some candidates wrote very strong formative evaluative comments and analysis sometimes seen as notes, alongside experimentation and centres should be careful not to under mark them. To access the higher mark bands of AO3, candidates should have included constructive proposals about improvements to their work. However, some less able candidates did include reasonable annotation of work with fairly well organised notes and individual comments.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available at
www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion