



Pearson

Moderator's Report Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2018

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 2018 series and is compiled from observations made nationally and internationally by the whole moderation 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 2019 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.

The AS qualification continues to provide a creditable 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 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:

- Reports from the moderation team mostly indicate that candidates are performing to a similar overall standard as in previous years.
- Art and Design, Fine Art and Photography, have the highest number of centres.
- Centres still had entries for AS, but the numbers have diminished from last year. The overall number of candidates per centre has also drastically decreased.
- Some centres had clung onto their AS and taking AS across a range of subjects is a centre driven directive – usually four AS levels undertaken in year 12, with candidates having to reduce to three subjects at the beginning of year 13.
- One Centre which claimed that they thought that the structure of the AS course they delivered helped candidates better prepare for focussing on the completion of an outcome or several outcomes for component 1 A level. They use AS as a “practice run” for the A level ESA. It was obvious that this centre’s well-structured AS level courses of Fine Art, Textiles and Photography really focussed on developing research skills, technical skills and the exploration of media and ideas. It also developed the candidates' awareness of sequential development and a focus on an end 'product' as well as the fundamental time management skills. Centres such as this strongly are teacher directed and, offer the AS as part of a wider portfolio of courses. The remit is to focus on developing a very broad range of skills that are fundamental to many art and design practices and media.

- In some cases “teacher direction” was very much in evidence and this was responsible for secure outcomes for lower achieving students, however, this was limiting to the stronger candidates whose ambitions were sometimes curtailed”.
- Sound centres tended to support more independent responses.
- Coursework themes were, in most cases, appropriate, interesting and challenging. Courses were constructed showing a real understanding of the process-based nature of the Specification.
- Centres with Edexcel GCSE benefited in the transition to GCE as there was already an established system and understanding when addressing Assessment Objectives. Many centres base their coursework units around our suggested “Themes” for the ESA, often with great success.
- There is indeed a wide variation in how centres engage their students for this unit. Many centres are now looking keenly at the Edexcel online exemplar material and re-use the featured artists.
- Centres appreciated the exemplar on the website.
- Sketchbooks still prevail as the preferred way of working and presenting developing work, contextual investigations and even media trials with outcomes presented separately. Some centres still present their Photography work in this way too.
- More and more centres, especially those whose courses are purely focussed on digital photography are using blogs to present the developing ideas and investigations, with only the final outcomes printed.

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 "Secrets, Codes & Conventions"

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 was generally more independently executed than Component 1 and the stronger centres tended to build successfully on the coursework experience. There were a few examples where some candidates had been ambitious and run out of time but generally their journeys evidenced an enthusiasm for the theme of Secrets, Codes and Conventions.
- Problems arose when students dealt with each of the words individually before making a choice – so each word generated a plethora of ideas, but students then ran out of development/refinement time and simply chose their 'best' idea to copy for their final outcome.
- Where students were given the same artists to explore at the start of the component, work tended to be more formulaic despite the possibilities of the exam theme. It was not until students started to develop their ideas for final outcomes that the work became more personal and inventive.
- Many centres use a 'systematic factory approach' which leads to a narrow range of ideas, materials and processes.
- Some centres advise the collection of random downloaded photographs – so wide ranging that they lead nowhere. Students then continue to rely on secondary imagery for their sources with very little selection or refinement. Consequently, there is little development or exploration but then hugely ambitious final outcomes without support, understanding or links to the preparatory work.
- Some of the more successful submissions had encouraged 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. So, 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. Candidates studying more than one title also enabled the skills and exploration of media to be transferred across their submissions.

- Samples placed within limited and basic tended to show a straightforward response from candidates – they seemed to opt for either Secrets or Codes and developed responses that were a literal definition of those words. Portraits and 'Selfies' with a hand over the mouth very much in evidence along with circuit boards as the literal interpretation for Codes.

- The theme did however result in a huge variety of ideas, such as:

Secrets – deceit, tragedy, romance, masks, secret messages contained within still-life paintings, hidden, wrapped, secret trade deals, political double dealings, shadows, mystery, mummies, shrouds, boxes, abandoned buildings, alleyways, priest holes, secret compartments, hoarding.

Codes – computer codes, circuit boards, patterning, coded objects in paintings (broken eggs, empty plates etc.) sign language, tattoos, braille, locks, keys, symbols of love (broken hearts etc.), technology taking over the world!

Conventions – rituals, clothing, cultures, Day of the Dead, stereotypes, societies' expectations of youth, death conventions, ballet conventions, procedures (cooking, surgery, chess,) OCD, seasons and tides.

- Once again while the 'issues based' approach is admirable, weaker students are unable to translate their findings visually – resulting in a wealth of written information but little evidence for the AOs.

General Assessment Observations

Often centres had placed candidates at least one level higher than national standards. Fewer are placing their candidates into the exceptional performance level, but many centres still feel the need to place their very highest candidates within that level unaware of last year's notional grade boundaries and that candidates had reached the highest possible grade without needing to use level 6 at all.

Moderators saw some good examples demonstrating confidence and assured abilities that matched qualities of level 5. However, these were placed in the exceptional mark band by some centres. Some centres still cannot accept that their candidates do not need to get full marks to achieve top grades.

Exemplar materials should be used as a clear guide as to where centre's candidates' work should be placed.

The performance calculator was understood and used correctly in other respects and well appreciated. Generally, however, centres still need to be more accurate in their assessment judgements.

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 marking 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

The AS Art and Design suite of titles continues to provide a really valuable qualification for many students and centres, who exploit them as foundation platforms for continuing on to the A Level equivalents.

As mentioned before, it is a concern to see departments prevented from entering candidates for AS, due to blanket mandates that are ignoring its benefits, and only seeing its disadvantages. These seem to be primarily financial and may be short-sighted. This approach has also caused strange dichotomies between centres that can deliver it and those that cannot. It raises the thorny question of which establishment is short changing, or alternately, advantaging their cohorts and what will be the long term consequences.

Those centres presenting submissions for AS demonstrate a rich variety of work that continues to impress the moderation team. It is also interesting that a percentage of the high quality work from this qualification is being taken forward to support the A Level submissions. Generally the breadth and flexibility offered by the two qualifications is being fully exploited by centres which incorporate AS as part of their curriculum.

As with the A Level, visiting moderators report that one of the great privileges of their work is the delight they get from seeing such a varied and delightful set of outcomes and portfolios.

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>