



Pearson



Examiners' Report/ Lead Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

NQF BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Firsts in Art and
Design

Unit 7: Recording for Creative Intentions
in Art and Design (21357E)



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Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade (Distinction, Merit, Pass and Level 1 fall-back). The grade awarded for each unit contributes proportionately to the overall qualification grade and each unit should always be viewed in the context of its impact on the whole qualification.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark should be for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each test we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each test, because then it would not take into account that a test might be slightly easier or more difficult than any other.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link: qualifications.pearson.com/gradeboundaries

Unit 7: Recording for Creative Intentions in Art & Design (21357E)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 1 Pass	Level 2		
			Pass	Merit	Distinction
Boundary Mark	0	9	14	19	25

Introduction

Team Leaders and moderators commented on how well the theme was received again this year. The 25 hours of non-assessed learning time focused around the pre-released theme, still needs to be used more effectively. Team leaders and moderators also commented on a good variety of visual sources being provided, especially skulls, logs, plants and flowers. They commented, once again, on how hard learners had worked to break down very recognisable forms to tease out details, shapes and creative opportunities. Within this there was a concern that over-familiarity with forms led to assumptions and creative leaps being made that were not necessarily evidencing links to visual observations from the physical sources provided. There was also a concern that a weighting imbalance had been created across the criteria due, in part, to learners feeling the need to over-emphasise on written annotations. Much of these did not add value, as they provided nothing more than a running commentary of what was obvious. For example: 'This is a drawing of a plant.'

With no feedback being permitted at the time of moderation, it is paramount that each centre makes full use of the moderator's report to help develop action plans and improvement strategies. It was also noted that a number of centres had not accessed the previous year's Examiner's report to help them with their planning

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

It is highly recommended that learners, as ever, look at past Unit 7 papers to help them to prepare for the 25 hours of observational practice and the 5 hour assessment in response to the paper. Learners should pay particular attention to the 'Information for learners' section of the paper which clearly lays out what is required. Similarly, teachers should always read 'information for teachers'. This ensures mandatory requirements are met.

Centres are getting better at lining up and providing accurate EDI printouts and assessment grids, although there is still confusion over what forms should be used and what evidence should be provided for moderation of this external unit. Centres should provide a print out which confirms the marks which have been entered online for learners for Unit 7. Marks must be submitted to Pearson ahead of the moderation visit. It is important that centres provide photographic evidence of the visual sources that learners have used to record their creative intentions.

It was also good to see that learners are continuing to build their studies around the brief and client expectations. Most learners focus well on the demands of the chosen brief while developing creative solutions. Although many learners are still trying to produce final outcomes rather than work that could be developed into final outcomes. Remember, we are looking for observational studies which are developed into innovative and exciting design ideas rather than polished final outcomes. We do not expect to see outcomes from a 5 hour assessment.

A more balanced approach needs to be taken by all learners. An emphasis on recording primary visual sources has been partly replaced this year by a dramatic increase in annotation. Where annotations tend to be more descriptive than analytical, they struggle to add any insight to developing design ideas. They also stifle design potential, even if analytical, as they try to provide evidence which can only be seen in visual explorations. Some learners clearly spent more time writing about their ideas and intentions than actually producing them. The whole paper can be responded to successfully without any supportive annotation and centres should be brave in encouraging a more visual response from learners. Analysis, development of ideas and reasoning can all be displayed through visual work and how observational studies unfold and develop through different stages of design towards exciting solutions.

Team leaders and moderators reflected on how much more design work could have taken place in the 5 hour test if copious annotations, including extended introductions and evaluations had been replaced by another page of design ideas linked to the chosen brief.

Team leaders and moderators commented on how they had seen good examples of learners focusing quickly on visual source details which then quickly moved into a series of design developments. These were accompanied by brief annotations which clearly supported and added to the flow of ideas. In terms of unlocking a learner's potential and accessing the higher marks, this needs to be seriously reflected upon.

It was good to see that learners were visualising their designs 'in situ', once again, when required by the chosen brief. Team leaders and moderators also commented on how even lower placed learners are embracing the creative process in a more holistic way this year, rather than addressing each criterion individually. In terms of a more flowing, personalised and organic approach to the development of design ideas this is very encouraging.

Team leaders and moderators commented on the range of pathways being chosen again this year. Added to the 'ever popular' visual arts, was visual communication and product design. The large-scale mural and small-scale decorative artwork piece were very popular within visual arts. In visual communication the postcard set was widely seen. In product design the decorative floor lamp was another popular choice. Many learners continue to rely on a more considered drawing style. This is fine, if this is handled smartly in terms of time and criteria where key evidence provides a broadening range of solutions and achieves the required depth and analysis. It is a skill that few possess, however, and something else that needs to be reflected upon. Learners are reminded, once again, how important it is to make full use of the suggested 10 minutes at the start of the test to go through the whole paper and consider their choices.

Team leaders and moderators commented on the variety of materials being used within such a small timeframe. Traditional dry media and especially pencil and pen were still the most popular. Added to this is an increase in drawing with the camera lens and digital work which is often seen outside the photography and visual communication pathways. Printing from found objects such as feathers and leaves were also popular. Within this, centres need to consider

how such a strong and easily recognisable form is moving design developments forward against a more free-flowing pencil thumbnail approach, for example.

Informative thumbnail sketches helped to link together and push forward developing design ideas, again this year. They often occurred throughout the design process, from illustrative mind maps at the start of the design process to evaluative insights. There were also good examples of 'over-sized' thumbnail designs, which had to be considered carefully as they contained a lot of design information.

Centres are reminded to focus on the assessment tools and teacher guidance when considering a learner's achievements. As a learner reaches the top of a mark band they must 'have some evidence partially meeting the criteria' for the mark band above. The awarding of 'not met', 'partially met' and 'fully met' also needs to be reflected upon. This was particularly pertinent to learners moving into mark band 3 and mark band 5. Encouragingly learners placed in level 1, provided evidence across all the criteria.

There were some exciting and original submissions this year which must be celebrated and championed as Unit 7 continues to go from strength to strength. We are so pleased to have seen a dramatic improvement in the quality of responses over the years, as this unit has matured. This is a testimonial to all the hard work from teachers who have invested so much into the teaching of this unit.

Summary

Based on the responses seen this series, the following should be noted:

- Review and discuss the moderator's report when results are published and use that to develop and help implement action planning.
- Look carefully at the assessment tools and teacher guidance.
- Annotations are not a replacement for visual evidence.
- Consider the weighting of visual work and annotations within the response.
- Collect and present a rich variety of visual sources to increase creative design opportunities.
- Look on the Pearson website for all the exemplar material available.
- Use selected questions from previous exam papers as 'mock assignments' to help prepare learners for the paper.
- Use the 25 hours of non-assessment time to prepare for the 5 hour exam.
- Ensure that the six specialist vocational pathways are fully understood so that choices are based on viable options for each learner.

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