

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2012

Entry Level Certificate
Design & Technology (8910)

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Introduction

Once again this year the work from centres generally covered the assessment criteria for the level awarded by the teacher examiner. One or two centres had assessed work at higher levels than was evidenced in the candidate portfolio. Again it is important for centres to note the assessment criteria at each level and apply this to the work of individual candidates.

Quality work from candidates has been seen this year and this has occurred where centres have carefully guided candidates either through specific worksheets or by giving the candidate a blank template with some guidance as to what should be included on that sheet. Whereas this has not been the case, candidates generally do not have sufficient guidance to hit the assessment criteria for a suitable level.

Internal moderation still remains an issue and although this is not an easy issue, where centres are looking at RMT, Food and Textiles, there is still a discrepancy between the amount and quality of work from some centres awarding the same levels across focus areas.

It is not sufficient to submit just a collection of photographic evidence with no supporting portfolio of the work covered by the candidate as a record of what they have done. Likewise teacher evidence needs to have some record by the candidate of discussions that may have taken place as it is not acceptable for all the evidence to be teacher observed.

There were some centres who did not submit any form of register with the coursework. If there is no OPTEMS or EDI printout available it makes moderation easy if there is a list of candidates and the level awarded. This is especially true if the packaging gets damaged in the post as the moderator has no check on what may be missing from a package. Centres must make sure that the work is sent securely, packaged preferably in one of the Edexcel plastic envelopes rather than paper packaging. There should be a Coursework Authentication Sheet with each piece of work sent for moderation completed by the candidate and the teacher. The work should also have a copy from the specification (pages 15, 16 or 17) of the record sheet. This should be annotated with the page number of where evidence can be found as a minimum. Those centres providing good descriptions of the various activities that candidates were involved in and how they responded was of great use in the moderation process.

The next three sections give brief details of the evidence presented for moderation at each level. There is some amplification of the types of evidence the moderator is expecting and what is not acceptable.

Level 1 Award

Gather Information: Most centres gave their candidate a specific board set task at this level and also provided suitable information for the candidate to use as research. It should be carefully guided by the teacher so that not all the candidates present exactly the same research but do actually make some comment as to why it is there and how it could inform the project.

Develop ideas and solutions: The ideas put forward by the candidate were often quite simple and consisted of one idea that was then made. This is acceptable at this level though some attempt should be encouraged to make some decisions to improve the idea would move the candidate closer to achieving the Level 2 award.

Use written and graphical techniques: Some candidates have difficulty with this type of evidence and most centres where this is the case have used additional help. This has been by scribing the written statements beneath the written work of the candidate. This is perfectly acceptable at this level; centres could consider sending digital recordings of discussions or simple question and answer sessions with candidates.

Produce and use simple schedules: There was little attempt at this section by candidates at this level. Simple instructions for a small part of one task would be useful evidence that could be included. The use of a series of statements that a candidate could cut and paste would be a suitable form of evidence that could be used.

Select and use tools and equipment: This was often evidenced by teacher observation which is acceptable at this level. The finished product was included here in the form of photographic evidence. It should be noted that the important item is the product here not the surrounding environment.

Test and evaluate the product: Once again this was the least successful part of the project at this level; most comments being subjective and stating how their time was used and an opinion of how well the project went.

Level 2 Award

Gather Information: Candidates often had a lot of research printed from the internet again this year. The research needs to be carefully selected and should have some comment on materials, function or other particular point as to why it is included. Without this it is merely a collection of information that does not inform the project in any way. There were some good teacher prepared sheets for candidates to use to complete a specification, this helped the candidate target their work and gave some basis for testing the product.

Develop ideas and solutions: The ideas were often two or three in number but not often sufficiently different. By asking candidates to change materials or processes this often leads to the need to consider different manufacturing techniques and therefore different ideas. The ideas do not have to be ones that candidates will necessarily make or produce but give scope for design activity which can be evaluated.

Use written and graphical techniques: Some centres used different forms of presentation by way of drawings, patterns and recipes with testing which gave scope for the candidate to show what they could do. There were a number of centres that used a computer to generate these forms of presentation but again this needs to be carefully guided so that candidates use the techniques not just copy from a master as some centres tended to do.

Produce and use simple schedules: There were a number of centres that used cut and paste flow charts which made the candidate think about production as a process and what order things need to be in. Some centres allowed the candidate to produce a storyboard for production and this can be quite daunting for larger projects. It would be acceptable for centres to encourage candidates to consider just part of the manufacturing process to limit the amount of time and effort needed to produce these storyboards.

Select and use tools and equipment: There was plenty of evidence that candidates could select and use tools and equipment in some of the work seen. This can be identified through a range of activities and the best work is seen from centres where the teacher has prepared this in advance. This could be in the form of identification of tools for a process or matching equipment to processes. It is also easy to moderate if the centre includes photographic evidence of candidates in the act of producing of their practical work.

Test and evaluate the product: Some centres presented this activity in the form of questions which the candidate answered relevant to their project. Some centres did get their candidates to refer to the specification to complete this section but it tended to be fairly subjective comment at this level.

Level 3 Award

Gather Information: Some excellent work was available at this level. A full brief with key words or phrases identified was evident. A good range of research including user surveys were also used to advantage by some centres. This enabled the candidate to produce a useable specification to work to and in some centres this had been carefully guided to ensure that the product could be tested.

Develop ideas and solutions: Ideas were often presented on 'busy' sheets which used a range of techniques both written and drawn. There was some good work using CAD from some centres. Ideas tended to be similar and could have been more diverse if centres had encouraged the

candidate to consider different materials and production techniques here too. The use of small drawings cut and pasted on to larger sheets is a common technique used to advantage and different presentation techniques can be used to assist the range of skills.

Use written and graphical techniques: There was some well presented drawing work showing a good range of skill. Many centres used a range of written, drawn and computer generated work which allowed their candidates to show what they could achieve. Whole projects using a computer as the only presentation does not allow candidates to show their capabilities in quite the same way as it gives everyone the same level of clarity with little flair.

Produce and use simple schedules: Once again this year the use of story boards, timelines and block diagrams were seen as part of planning for making. Some modelling of the finished article has been used by some centres; this is to be encouraged as it often leads to development of the final idea where scale and proportion can be seen.

Select and use tools and equipment: The production of the finished article was often to a good standard. It should be noted that it is not necessarily the complexity of the project that is required but a simple product produced to a good level of finish and quality is what is expected at this level. Reasonable fitting and interface between parts is important for the Level 3 Award as well as the quality of finish. Some centres have not taken this into account when assessing criteria at this level. A finished product does not necessarily guarantee a level 3, it must be supported by a portfolio of work covering all the assessment criteria.

Test and evaluate the product: Many centres do encourage their candidates to evaluate their work at this level. There is often some supporting testing completed but needs to be relevant to the product and the specification. Potential users are often asked to give an opinion on the finished product too and this is a valuable process to encourage candidates to evaluate product against what they need.

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