

GCSE 2004

June Series



Report on the Examination

Applied Art and Design (Double Award)

- Unit 1 2D and 3D visual language
- Unit 2 Materials, techniques and technology
- Unit 3 Working to project briefs

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All Units

General

This was the first opportunity for certification of this new award. The new specification is increasing in popularity as centres become familiar with the requirements and special features of the qualification. This GCSE replaces the Part One GNVQ Foundation and Intermediate qualifications, and the best evidence for assessment was provided through well-devised centre set assignments reflecting the vocational requirements of the award. Assessment is designed to give credit for what candidates can do as well as what they know, and is based on both portfolio units (Unit 1 and Unit 2) and external assessment (Unit 3). Moderators look to the assessment evidence grids to ensure that portfolio evidence is complete. Each grid has two components; the line across the top of the grid which indicates the type of evidence that must be produced, e.g. a range of 2D and 3D techniques, and secondly, the columns that give the quality indicators contained within the evidence. Teachers need to ensure that assignments are sufficient to allow the required evidence to be generated, and that the quality indicators are present in the work when it is marked. There were instances where the quality indicators were missing, and where opportunities for independence and a high level of technical skill and fluency in the work produced were not provided or recognised in centres.

Assessment

The accuracy of assessment varied, with marking outside the standard being both lenient and severe at the extremes of the range. The actual numerical mark awarded by the teacher within a particular level should reflect not only that the candidate has achieved the necessary criteria, but also the quality of the work produced in meeting the criteria. At the higher levels, candidates must demonstrate an independent approach, and exhibit a high order of ability and understanding. This was often not evident in the portfolio work, and there were instances where insufficient regard had been given to the requirements of the assessment evidence grids in the allocation of marks.

Administrative efficiency

Administration and presentation of work for moderation varied greatly. When paperwork is completed correctly on appropriate AQA forms, and the work is presented and labelled clearly it aids the moderation process. There is no requirement for moderation purposes to display work on walls. If centres choose to display work in this way they must ensure that candidates' written comments are visible to the moderator. Well organised folders are essential. There were instances where the relevant record sheets were not completed correctly. Unit Record Sheets which clearly support the mark awarded and indicate where evidence can be sourced are essential. These sheets can also be used as witness statements and to support health and safety where appropriate, and to give an indication of how independent a candidate has been. The space for teachers' comments to provide justification of the mark awarded was not well used, those who did use this box tended to only list evidence provided. Better explanation here would help visiting moderators judge where marks had been awarded. Most centres provided all of the required sample, and realised that the work of all the candidates should be accessible to the moderator if needed.

Recommendations

The individual centre specific issues will have been identified in the visiting moderator's report. There remain general issues that may have relevance to centres which can be summarised as follows:

- achieve a balance between 2D and 3D work in portfolio units, and encourage experimentation with different 3D materials and techniques;

- use a range of appropriate primary and secondary sources and drawing as starting points for work;
- encourage candidates to develop their own ideas and images based on the work of others, and improve the vocational references to contemporary working;
- improve the level of annotation and include both formative and summative evaluative comments;
- when awarding marks ensure that the requirements of the assessment evidence grids are met and use Unit Record Sheets for further explanation;
- label and display work clearly and cross-reference Units 1 and 2 where appropriate.

Portfolio Units

Unit 1 – 2D and 3D visual language and

Unit 2 – Materials, techniques and technology

Assignments/Tasks

Most centres used appropriate vocational briefs as a vehicle to generate evidence for Units 1 and 2, and to prepare candidates for Unit 3. Some portfolio work submitted by centres was lively and imaginative, and had allowed candidates to explore a range of 2D and 3D techniques through well structured and interesting assignments. Examples of good practice extended the range of 2D media, and included relevant and, in some cases, a sophisticated use of the computer in generating images and effects that ran in parallel with traditional mark-making techniques. However, ICT was generally limited in its use, mainly acting as a device to record or purely scan images, which then used effects. ICT as a tool to develop ideas or outcomes was not well used.

There was an improved range of 3D work, but in some centres the coverage of 3D techniques and materials used was more limited. There was a lack of experimentation, and coverage of both resistant and non-resistant 3D materials was not always evidenced. Candidates did not have a good command and understanding of object making techniques, and this was apparent in Unit 2 criteria 4 and 5 (bullet points four and five in the Assessment marking criteria). Not all centres covered the banner/strapline requirements well and some missed the opportunity to plug gaps by cross-referencing Units 1 and 2.

Some excellent use of sketchbooks was seen to record sources, explore visual language, and to develop ideas and intentions. The use of annotation is a significant feature of exploration and research, particularly in the work of others, and good candidates explained their work and ideas well in relevant and evaluative comments throughout. However, for Unit 1 assessment criteria 4 and 5, the use of comments on others' and own use of visual language, materials, techniques and technology, was often a weakness in candidate portfolios with little formative or summative evaluation being evidenced well. Candidates should be given guidance on form and content since it is particularly important that annotation is relevant and has evaluative (formative and summative) content.

Unit 3 – Working to project briefs

An improved understanding of the vocational process was seen, however some issues remain. A range of alternative design solutions which are clearly informed by research and others' work needs to be evidenced.

More candidates responded to the 3D briefs in this series producing some innovative responses. However, in some instances there was no supporting evidence in the form of 3D models or maquettes and no reference was made to making techniques. The responses to the briefs, based on the theme of Country Parks, was generally good, although there was some misinterpretation of the term 'wildlife' by some candidates, who did not relate this to the scenario of a country park. Some candidates did not state clearly which was their final design proposal. This needs to be labelled and clearly displayed. Often, insufficient note had been taken of the constraints identified in the brief; for example, scale was not evident in the work, and the method of producing the final piece of work had not been given due consideration. A final finished piece to scale is not required, but the work presented must be of a standard and scale suitable to present to the client.

At the research stage many candidates obtained primary information through visits to country parks and urban farms and had taken photographs, however, some candidates relied entirely on secondary sources. The use of others' work was not well recorded in preparatory work or used to develop a range of alternative ideas. There was still a varying amount of work presented for assessment, the equivalent of two and not more than four A1 sheets (or a sketchbook or other suitable form) was interpreted as any number of smaller sheets by some centres. Sketchbooks often included numerous leaflets, and information that was not relevant to the briefs, and candidates often became side-tracked by cartoon style imagery in their design proposals.

Final ideas were often very successful and candidates had clearly enjoyed the process of development and production, although they sometimes failed to identify a suitable scale or weatherproof materials. A popular choice was the mural design for the wall of the children's play area to depict farm animals or wildlife, and the more successful candidates explored the theme well and used different artist's styles to inform a variety of different responses. Others struggled to produce convincing images. The use of different and mixed media to produce the work was not well explored, most using a single paint medium. Size and scale were often not given due consideration in the choice of image.

The design for a sculpture to be placed in the mini-beast wood produced some exciting 3D proposals and some innovative responses. However, in some instances the models, or lack of models, was disappointing. The design for decorative fencing for animal enclosures was not a popular choice and some weak responses were seen with little regard for the constraints and safety aspects in the design proposals together with flimsy maquettes made from unsuitable materials. The design for a folded leaflet to advertise the Country Park met with success in most responses, especially where good use of ICT had been made to present the final submission. Some very successful fabric designs for use on the parasols within the picnic area were seen. There was excellent use of repeating images and patterns based on country life and nature developed from the work of artists such as William Morris.

The requirement to produce a short, written evaluation of the final idea needs to be focused on the final design proposal and its relationship to the brief, rather than a chronological description of what was done. It met with generally a good response, and well annotated records of initial ideas and developments informed these successful comments. The most successful candidates had a clear understanding of the design process and of the constraints and considerations of the chosen brief, and could explain why their idea was fit for purpose. Weaker candidates also managed to explain their work although in a more descriptive format. However, here the level of comments was weak and did not review the work or intentions, or show understanding, particularly of the work of others.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Unit	Maximum Mark (Raw)	Maximum Mark (Scaled)	Mean Mark (Scaled)	Standard Deviation (Scaled)
2D and 3D visual language 3810/1	50	50	26.2	10.4
Materials, techniques and technology 3810/2	50	50	25.4	10.5
Working to project briefs 3810/3	50	50	25.3	10.8

For units which contain only one component, scaled marks are the same as raw marks.

Unit 1 – 2D and 3D visual language (1334 candidates)

	Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Scaled Boundary Mark	50	44	37	30	23	19	15	12	9
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

Unit 2 – Materials, techniques and technology (1334 candidates)

	Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Scaled Boundary Mark	50	42	36	30	24	19	15	11	7
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

Unit 3 – Working to project briefs (1165 candidates)

	Max. mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Scaled Boundary Mark	50	44	37	30	23	18	14	10	6
Uniform Boundary Mark	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

Provisional statistics for the award

Overall (1292 candidates)

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Cumulative %	4.8	15.7	35.7	55.0	72.2	84.6	93.0	97.7

Definitions

Boundary Mark: the minimum (scaled) mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

Mean Mark: is the sum of all candidates' marks divided by the number of candidates. In order to compare mean marks for different components, the mean mark (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).

Standard Deviation: a measure of the spread of candidates' marks. In most components, approximately two-thirds of all candidates lie in a range of plus or minus one standard deviation from the mean, and approximately 95% of all candidate lie in range of plus or minus two standard deviations from the mean. In order to compare the standard deviations for different components, the standard deviation (scaled) should be expressed as a percentage of the maximum mark (scaled).

Uniform Mark: a score on a standard scale which indicates a candidate's performance. The lowest uniform mark for grade A* is always 90% of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, similarly grade A is 80%, grade B is 70%, grade C is 60%, grade D is 50%, grade E is 40%, grade F is 30% and grade G is 20%. A candidate's total scaled mark for each unit is converted to a uniform mark and, when subject grades are awarded in 2004, the uniform marks for the units will be added in order to determine the candidate's overall grade.