AQA

ASSESSMENT **and**
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Secondary Education

Applied Art and Design (Double Award) 3811

3810/3 Working to project briefs

Report on the Examination

2007 examination - January series

Unit 3 – Working to Project Briefs

General

Centres familiar with the vocational requirements of the award provided the best evidence for assessment, where candidates were well prepared and their work reflected the vocational process. In this unit candidates learn to understand and use the creative process to meet a set brief in art, craft or design.

Assessment is designed to confirm candidates' understanding of the set brief, and the working methods and resources needed to fulfil it. The unit is internally assessed and externally moderated. Moderators look to the assessment evidence grid to ensure that evidence is complete. The grid has two components; the line across the top of the grid which indicates the type of evidence that must be produced, eg research and developmental work to meet the brief, and the columns that give the quality indicators within that evidence. Teachers need to ensure that underpinning knowledge and guidance on the practicalities of working to a brief are covered through similar vocationally related activities, which may be in the form of smaller briefs and assignments. Candidates should be encouraged to adopt a professional approach through planning, recording and evaluating their progress throughout the project.

Response to the project briefs

The responses to the briefs based on the theme of *Ancient Civilisation Holidays* were generally very good and some vibrant, confident, ambitious and exciting work was seen. Candidates who embraced the theme and sought to develop ideas which were both creative and had a practical value were most successful and some innovative and appropriate design solutions were proposed. Responses to each of the five briefs were seen. Popular choices were the design for a brochure, in which images of the four chosen civilisations (Chinese, Egyptian, Greek and Roman) were to be promoted, and the design for a sculpture reflecting archaeological treasures from one of the civilisations. There were fewer responses to the briefs to design an exhibition stand; for a print to be used as illustration for a poster; and for designs for fabric but there were some innovative and well researched responses. In some cases the constraints identified in the brief were not noted. For example, scale was not evident in the work and the method of production of the final piece of work was not 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 some candidates visited museums to study artefacts from ancient civilisations, and some used photographs to record their visit but there was a lack of drawing from first-hand sources. There was evidence of research and analysis of the visual elements of the work of artists from ancient civilisations, but very little about their working methods. The work of others, especially that of contemporary artists and designers, was not always well recorded in the preparatory work. It was not used in a meaningful way to develop ideas, and lacked vocational contextualisation to directly influence the work. There were some centres where ICT and other technological media were used very successfully, particularly in producing the brochure front cover and the fabric design. The use of the internet for research is beginning to be used more effectively to obtain relevant information.

The requirement for the equivalent of not less than two, and not more than four, A1 sheets (or a sketchbook or other suitable form) of research and developmental work was met well by centres. Good sketchbooks often included information, exploration and ideas that led to exciting and successful design proposals. In many cases a range of appropriate alternatives was lacking and this is still a weakness in the design process. A broad range of appropriate materials was not always explored, especially where a 3D proposal was selected, with few 3D prototypes or samples being presented.

Final ideas were often very successful, and candidates had clearly enjoyed the process of development and production, although they sometimes failed to identify suitable scale, health and safety considerations, and materials best suited to the final design. In some centres it was clear that candidates had worked within a set structure and consequently did not submit an individual, personal response.

Brief 1 Poster Illustration

The first brief was to design a print to be used as an illustration for a poster. This was to be a figurative representation of **one** of the civilisations and its antiquities, using five separate colours, including at least two overprinted. The most successful candidates explored the theme well and used recognisable imagery to inform a sophisticated response. Other candidates struggled to produce convincing prints which illustrated the civilisations in a successful way. Their designs were often simple and research or analysis of printing processes, especially in a vocational context, was missing. The instruction that at least two colours should be overprinted was important and some candidates failed to address this aspect of the design or used unsuitable methods of production.

Brief 2 Sculpture

The second brief was the design for a sculpture for the exhibition stand at the trade fair, which could be freestanding or suspended. The most successful candidates explored the theme well and used a variety of media and techniques to produce ambitious and exciting work. The requirement that the sculpture reflect archaeological treasures from **one** of the civilisations sometimes led to copies of existing artefacts. Some designs did not consider the size of the proposed sculpture, or health and safety issues in siting the sculpture. Those candidates who had a clear understanding of the impact and context of designs produced striking and successful outcomes which used materials and techniques well.

Brief 3 Exhibition Stand

The third brief for an exhibition stand for the trade fair was handled well by the candidates who chose it.   Appropriate types and styles of stand were researched and some lively and interesting work was seen which reflected imagery from the four civilisations. Designs were most successful when suitable materials and techniques were explored and where candidates were able to work with confidence.

Brief 4 Brochure Front Cover

The design for the outer front cover for the company's brochure, to include the name of the company, *Ancient Civilisation Holidays,* met with a good response. However, some candidates produced uninspiring designs which used images from the four civilisations in a very limited 'copy and paste' technique of ready made images and simple juxtaposition. Text was not always incorporated successfully into the design and some work lacked a suitably professional finish. Some very effective designs were produced using ICT which achieved a very professional finish and many aesthetically pleasing compositions were seen in innovative final outcomes.

Brief 5 Fabric Design

The final brief, to design fabric to be used as part of a uniform to be worn by the company staff, met with some very strong responses. The motifs and colours of one of the civilisations were used to influence the designs very effectively. Research into *pattern* was shallow, and relevant artists were not well recorded in the process. ICT was very well used in some centres to produce the design, and professional results were achieved, with some very effective visualisations of the finished fabric as ties, neck scarves and jackets. In some cases, the designs were basic and lacked development, with some candidates not understanding, or ignoring, the requirement to use a half drop repeat.

Evaluation

The requirement to produce a short written evaluation of the final idea generally met with a good response and well annotated records of initial ideas and developments informed these successful comments. A clear understanding of both the design process and the constraints and considerations of the brief was evident in the most successful work, with a thorough acknowledgement of why the idea was fit for purpose. Less successful candidates also managed to explain their work in a descriptive format, although the level of comment was weak. Such evaluations were generally a potted history rather than a focus on the final idea and how it was fit for purpose. Evaluations should identify possible improvements that could be made, review the candidate's work and intentions, and show understanding, particularly of the work of others. Candidates should be given guidance on the form and content since it is particularly important that annotation is relevant and has evaluative (formative and summative) content.

Assessment

The accuracy of assessment varied, with marking outside the standard being mainly too lenient in the higher mark range. The 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 undertaken in meeting the criteria. At the higher level, candidates must demonstrate an independent approach, and exhibit a high order of ability and understanding. There were instances where insufficient regard had been given to the requirements of the assessment marking grids in the allocation of marks.

Administrative efficiency

Most centres provided the relevant paperwork although there were instances where the correct Centre Mark Forms and Unit Record Sheets were not fully completed, and some Candidate Record Forms were not signed. Teacher comments on Unit Record Sheets should provide a justification for the mark awarded. Clearer explanation would help visiting moderators to judge where marks had been awarded. Most centres provided the entire sample and realised that the work of all the candidates should be accessible to the moderator if needed. In some centres a quiet room where the moderator could work, without interruptions, was not made available. Adequate provision must be made for the moderator's visit. It is not necessary to display the work but all pieces must be accessible and it must be easy to read any written comments.

Recommendations

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

- ensure that candidates clarify accurately the requirements of the brief and state which brief they chose

- ensure that candidates understand and adhere to the constraints of their chosen brief

- make effective use of primary and secondary source material to inform and develop ideas

- encourage the development of ideas to include a range of possible responses and potential alternatives

- encourage candidates to develop their own ideas and images based on the work of others

- ensure a range of appropriate materials are explored, especially in 3D design proposals, and that health and safety issues are referenced

- improve the level of annotation and include both formative and summative evaluative comments.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the **Results statistics** page of the AQA Website.