Examiners' Report Summer 2009

GCSE

GCSE in Applied Art and Design (2301)

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1- INTRODUCTION

The Examiners' Report is compiled from moderators' end-of-series reports and includes the views of the Principal Moderator, the Chief Examiner and the Chair of Examiners. It shows an extensive analysis of how centres have performed, from many informed viewpoints. It is not often easy to draw firm conclusions from the feedback received, as the responses shown by centres can vary enormously. Strengths in some centres are areas for improvement in others, and *vice versa*.
Teacher-assessors should evaluate their own performance against each point raised in the report, highlighting areas for improvement in their centres.
Further feedback will, of course, be provided in individual reports to centres that have been moderated this series.

General information

All units in the qualification were centre-assessed and the marks were moderated by Edexcel's visiting moderators, who based their decisions on the marks given for a sample of student portfolios from each centre.

2009 was the penultimate moderation series for this qualification. The final series will be in June 2010. There will be no re-sitting of units in 2011. The Paper for the 2010 Unit 3: Working to Project Briefs will be available on the Edexcel website from September 2009.

One Edexcel INSET meeting in London took place for the GCSE in Applied Art and Design during the last year, to cover aspects such as curriculum planning, assignment writing, preparation for the externally-set assignment, assessment, and feedback on the previous moderation series. Participants received a CD dealing comprehensively with major aspects of delivery, suitable for both new and established programmes and teachers.

Throughout the year the Edexcel website carried the Specification plus an addendum, the revised assessment grids and the 2008 Examiners' report.

A few centres were moderated for the first time this series. These had made good use of available material such as the Examiners' Report and had generally performed well.

As for last year, on visiting the homepage of www.edexcel.com teacher-assessors will be able to access the 'Ask the Expert' scheme during the coming year. They can email their queries and problems direct to the Chief Examiner, receiving an answer within 48 hours.

Structure of the Qualification

The GCSE in Applied Art and Design (Double Award) comprises of three equally weighted units:

5301 Unit 1: 2D and 3D Visual Language   Portfolio unit
5302 Unit 2: Materials, Techniques and Technology   Portfolio unit
5303 Unit 3: Working to Project Briefs   Externally-set assignment

It is normal (and recommended) for Units 1 and 2 to be assessed on the basis of a common set of portfolio evidence. Unit 3, the externally-set assignment, is assessed on the basis of a project undertaken in response to Edexcel's given theme and choice of briefs.

Centres are encouraged to add further focus to the theme and scenario by writing supplementary project briefs to focus on available resources and centre strengths. Evidence from Unit 3 will normally contribute to Units 1 and 2, as it employs a combination of Visual Language and Materials, Techniques and Technology. Where the work for the externally-set assignment is the pinnacle of achievement, this contribution can be very significant and justifies allocating the project **more time than the required minimum of 30 hours**. Given that Unit 3 is equally weighted to Units 1 and 2, it is only reasonable that a very substantial amount of time should be dedicated to it, especially as work can be carried across as evidence for Unit 1 and 2. This is not in itself a guarantee of success, but has resulted in a much more cohesive response and is strongly recommended.

Assessment Evidence

As in previous years, moderators were instructed that the absence of 3D work in Units 1 and 2 should not result in withholding all marks, but should preclude candidates from achieving in Mark band 3, regardless of how good their 2D work was. (It is very rare to find ample 3D and a lack of 2D work).

A similar ruling was applied to a lack of relevant primary-sourced research. Thanks to the easy availability of primary sources for the Unit 3 *'MusicMAX'* project this was rarely a problem.

Also within the *'MusicMAX''* project, the absence of the specific vocational requirement, the series of postcards, precluded candidates from achieving in Mark Band 3 for assessment strand 4.

Lack of focus on the 'shape, form and detail of musical instruments,' also restricted marks for the Unit 3 externally-set assignment.

Administrative Procedures

Centres were required to mark each candidate's work for each unit out of a total of 50 marks.
The marks were then transcribed to the OPTEMS forms; the top copies sent to Edexcel's processing department and the remaining copies retained in the

centre (one for the moderator's visit, from which the moderation sample was chosen, and one for centre records).

The EDI system, which enables centres to enter their marks online, is gaining in popularity.
Authentication Forms must be signed by all candidates. Missing forms or signatures caused a problem in only a few centres.

The continued practice of showing asterisks on the OPTEMS sheets to select random candidates, whose work was required for the moderation sample, gave little problem. As the system for moderation of the Applied programme is different from that for the Single award (in that the portfolios are viewed holistically for Units 1 and 2), the Appointment letter included a requirement for the whole portfolio to be presented for every candidate asterisked – even if they were nominated for only one unit.

2- 5303 (Unit 3): WORKING TO PROJECT BRIEFS

- The theme for the 2009 Unit 3: Working to Project Briefs externally-set assignment was *MusicMAX.* The theme and scenario were chosen primarily to facilitate easy access to primary source research material.
- The theme, on 'the shape, form and detail of musical instruments' was coupled with a clear fictional scenario based on *Music and Art in Colleges and Schools (MACS)* which was eager to encourage students to take a greater interest in music in all its forms; from jazz to folk, ethnic to global, classical to rock, opera to blues or brass band. To foster this, it sponsored a promotion entitled *MusicMAX.* As part of this the Society invited submissions of student art, craft and design work to be sold or used at its *MusicMAX* 'World Music' festivals around the country. The promotion also consisted of a quarterly magazine spotlighting music concerts, festivals and theatrical events for distribution to all schools and colleges, incorporating art and design work produced by the students at which it was aimed.
- Overall, a full span of marks was seen, from single figures to the full score of 50, which demonstrated the suitability of the set theme and scenario. The same mark was often arrived at for work with very different strengths and weaknesses, highlighting the flexibility of the assessment grids.
- The Paper was generally well-received. Many centres invested time and effort into making Unit 3 successful. A few teachers said that they or their students did not like the theme: These few are reminded that in the commercial world practitioners often have to work on projects outside their own realms of interest.
- The options within the briefs were formulated to cover all major areas of expertise within centres, who usually worked to their strengths, although some ill-informed, obvious choices were made from initial ideas for the final outcome.

- 'Rehearsals' for Unit 3, in the form of vocational projects (sometimes past Papers) were seen in some centres. This resulted in candidates often working with a greater familiarity of the needs of a brief for *'MusicMAX.*

Unit 3 Assessment Evidence:

Produce work in response to a brief

- Moderators reported seeing some of the best work ever for Unit 3. However, in a few cases the work for Unit 3 was not always the best in a candidate's portfolio, usually due to poor time allocation or management.

- Last year the Examiners' Report carried some stern comments to centres that produced several 'final outcomes' from more than one brief, without identifying which a candidate was submitting to the client and evaluating as the final piece. Centres have responded to this: Generally, the candidate response to a 'range of work' was less prolific this year in terms of varied 'trial' activities (assessment strand 3), unless they occurred before a cut-off point when individual candidates chose the technique/option they wanted to take through to fruition as the final piece to one of the briefs.

- Many centres responded appropriately to the *MusicMAX* project, adhering well to the client's requirement that the work must be inspired by the 'shape, form and detail of musical instruments'. The Paper was written extremely concisely. Its aims were clear and unambiguous. However, although many centres responded with accuracy and enthusiasm, not all centres and candidates found it simple to follow, resulting in the restriction of marks. Some teachers did not read, or misread requirements which were clearly listed. This led to the possibility of candidates being penalised for the teachers' misconception:

  - The clearly-defined vocational requirement for a 'series of postcards, focussed on the final work,' was misinterpreted by some candidates, who used developmental work, or only submitted one postcard rather than a series, or none at all.

  - Some centres allowed individual candidates to deviate from the theme to concentrate on one performer or musical style, (or dance, musical notation, rock chicks or a globe of the world, etc.) which the Paper clearly warned was likely to restrict marks. ('The client requires that candidates consider a broad view of the world

of music. Focus throughout the project on only one style or performer will be likely to limit mark potential'.)

- A few centres directed the whole cohort to deviate from the theme within later stages of the brief, rendering the collection of research material based on the theme completely worthless, so restricting marks.

- It cannot be stressed too strongly that success in this unit depends greatly on the approach taken by teachers delivering the project. Where the Paper had not been thoroughly read and analysed prior to distribution to candidates, or where a pared-down version had been issued without the consultation and negotiation requested, deficiencies were likely to occur in the candidate response. A prime example of this was the response to the requirement for the series of postcards. Next year's Paper will include a similar specific requirement. Careful vocational consideration will be required.

- Some centres enlisted the help of a practitioner to work with the candidates, inspiring a strong response.

- Fine art was once again the most popular option, often with much success. Practical skills in fine art were often indicative of Mark Band 3, but it was often the adherence to the brief that differentiated between candidates of similar abilities. For example, the link between candidates' paintings and their use either as limited edition prints or stage backdrops needed to be specified and resolved to maximise mark potential.

- Few supplementary briefs were seen this year, but where they were used, they often nurtured outstanding results, involving the music department and even the whole school community.

Meet the constraints of a brief, including time and material constraints

- Although most centres realised the importance of this unit and allocated adequate time for delivery, it was disappointing to see the continued insistence in many centres on setting a final 'exam'. (This tended to be 10 hours maximum, insufficient for the final making process.) It does not represent vocational practice. Often, some very promising initial ideas were rejected in favour of a rather obvious solution. The Paper states that candidates should be taught, as in any other project, but the policy of setting the final making process as an examination seems to preclude any solution that isn't manageable under those constraints.

- Assessment strand 4, in particular, also suffered as a consequence of this, with little time for evaluating, presenting and exhibiting work.

Centres are reminded that delivery can begin at any time after the paper is posted on the Edexcel web site in early September. There is no excuse for the work being rushed or unresolved.

- At best, advance planning by teachers resulted in a supportive structure to help all abilities achieve and ensured that all aspects of the banner heading on the unit assessment grid were well-covered. Assessment was then entirely reliant on individual candidate achievement rather than being hampered by centre deficiencies. Time was found for some very interesting and relevant visits to museums and galleries, to get the projects off to a strong start.

- In many cases, there was little evidence of candidates taking any responsibility for planning their own timescale. Conversely, some centres made candidates well aware of deadlines and interim cut-off points, which helped them to produce focussed and well structured weekly plans. Many candidates stated their aims with clarity, but it was common for no reference to be made to the needs of the client after this, until a brief acknowledgement in the Summative evaluation. In approximately half the centres no reference to the Candidate Checklist was seen at all within the work, which was a formal requirement of the Paper.

- Moderators reported that materials used are becoming more exciting and often vocationally relevant (e.g. canvases for paintings, manipulated photos to show sculpture in situ, laser cutting techniques for plastics and wood) and some inspired use of materials was seen in the trophy option in particular. Some outcomes were of a professional standard, including glass work and commercially printed backdrop banners. A keen awareness was shown in a few centres of commercial process. E.g. lithography and giclée print techniques were compared for the realisation of the fine art limited edition prints.

- It was, as always, unfortunate that material constraints were largely dictated by what a centre could provide, rather than what was appropriate for the realisation of an idea. However, some inappropriate materials and techniques were employed which restricted marks. Originals for the limited edition fine art print and even some backdrop designs were produced as collages, without any indication as to how this effect would be communicated in the commercially produced final products. The hat design which was required to be 'comfortable and safe to wear, in materials appropriate for the finished product' was seen in mod-roc or papier-mâché. Mistakes such as this can be avoided.

- Yet again this year, some candidates had not been given time to display and evaluate their response to the brief, presenting it 'as if to a client', which was a requirement of the Paper, carrying 26% of the marks (assessment strand 4).

- The postcard requirement and the focus of the brief on musical instruments (see above) were prime constraints, and were met with varying degrees of success.

Collect primary and secondary source information

Use primary and secondary source material to understand and respond to the brief

- This year's theme was very accessible, and it was possible for teachers to provide stimulating research material without candidates even having to leave the art studio. It met with a variable response, from the correct interpretation - a broad view of the world of music - to focus on one instrument, usually the guitar.

- The response to the need for 'collecting' both primary and secondary sources was generally strong. At best there was some exceptionally good observational drawing, both as large scale still-life work and as detailed observations in sketchbooks. Sometimes secondary sources, which were readily available, took prominence.

- Visits to museums and musical collections were undertaken by many centres, for which they are commended.

- The 'use' to which the collected material was put was, however, minimal in some centres. At worst it seemed to be viewed as a discrete task, which could then be put aside and not used in the development of final ideas, even when workshops, eg in print or textiles, were carried out to increase the range of work produced. Irrelevant research material, of ipods, earphones, individual artistes and rock chicks was introduced at this stage, and some final outcomes ignored the musical instrument focus entirely. Although many candidates interpreted the theme correctly, with well-focussed work throughout the project, final outcomes very often featured just one instrument, eg guitar or saxophone, rather than a broad view of musical instruments, which wasted a lot of high quality research material, and contravened client instructions.

- All centres had looked at some artists, designers and/or craftspeople. Centres that had prescribed specific artists' work at the start of the unit (Picasso and Braque were favourites) produced less individual outcomes. Those that had encouraged candidates to find art work relevant to their chosen area of the brief demonstrated more imaginative use of visual language.

- Bibliographies, and the listing of websites, were rare.

- Time was wasted in some centres on the transcription of others' work or candidates' own photos which did not move the project forward. This may have provided evidence for other units, but there was a danger that the impetus and focus of the project would be lost.

Use tools, equipment and technology safely and effectively to meet the requirements of the brief

- Safety issues are important in a vocational context. They are the first thing in which a new employee is inducted. Reflecting this importance, failure to reference relevant safe practice resulted in a loss of mark potential in some centres. (The references can be in other parts of the portfolio, but location should be stated on the assessment grid.)

- Where sufficient time had been allowed for the final making process the use of tools, equipment and technology was often very skilful. Backdrops were scaled-down for practical reasons, although a few full scale ones were seen, which had great impact.

- It was rare to see the use of a recognised scale to convey actual measurement, but visual representation in situ was usually included, sometimes to very good effect when computer manipulation of images was employed.

- Often process was recorded within a written evaluation. This was problematic as it confused the real aims of that evaluation. It is more appropriate to record process earlier in the project, linking it to Health and Safety, to support practical evidence for assessment strand 2. The evaluation can then analyse how well executed the work was, how well it answered the brief, and on reflection, how it could have been done differently to give a better response - a subtle difference. If a technique used in Unit 3 had been trialled and recorded in earlier work, then it was not essential for process to be rewritten for Unit 3. The emphasis in this unit is the degree of practical skill in meeting the requirements of the brief.

- Where candidates had videoed presentations there was substantial reference to how the work had been produced, missing the opportunity for 'selling' the final work to the client.

Display the work

- The display of work was interpreted at moderation to be everything from the inception of the brief, in sketchbooks and on sheets.

Therefore, if it was not possible for an exhibition to be held before the OPTEMS deadline, marks for strand 4 could still be earned.

- The postcard requirement was moderated here. It was a distinct task, carried out with professionalism in most centres, but in some poor presentation techniques wasted mark potential. Misinterpretation of the requirement also resulted in the restriction of marks. The task seemed rushed in some centres, and not done at all by some candidates, but some superb presentation was seen: crisp, clean, and very professional. Teachers reported candidates being thrilled with postcards which truly showed the work to best advantage.

- Another requirement considered here was the showing of work - the backdrop, sculpture, and even trophy - as if in situ. This also contributed to the range of work produced. Some centres with no access to PhotoShop-type image-manipulation software cut and pasted work onto a background to show it in situ, but again, as one of the last tasks of the brief, it was sometimes ignored.

- Exhibitions to parents, students and staff were evidenced by some centres using video or stills photography. Some were left up for moderators to view, although most displayed work had been set up by teachers after the OPTEMS deadline and could not contribute towards marks.

Evaluate own response to the brief

- Adherence to the Paper in assessment strand 4 had a huge bearing on the success of evaluation. Candidates who had wandered from the theme could not possibly justify this to the client.

- As in previous years, deficiencies in strand 4 were sometimes the result of poor time management on the part of the centre, not individual candidate, with the final outcome being produced as an exam piece within the GCSE exam period. Candidates then had no classes left to attend to bring their submissions to a suitable conclusion.

- Some centres made a presentation of some sort as if to a client, or wrote an evaluation as if to a client. Interesting approaches to evaluation included a letter to the client or spoof newspaper/magazine reports.

- There are those centres, however, that just churned out the same 'I did this, then I did that' document that did not address the needs of this unit. This restricted the mark for strand 4 and reflected the lack of vocational awareness shown throughout the project.

- Moderators had been directed that no series of postcards, a specific vocational requirement of the brief which focussed on the attributes of the final piece, should preclude marks in MB3 for that strand.

- The Candidate Checklist, supplied in the Candidates' Paper, was still absent this year from at least half the portfolios moderated. This checklist (or a suitable alternative) is a formal requirement of the project and must be used.

Assessment

- Assessment of Unit 3 was judged most often to be accurate to slightly lenient. Sometimes it was significantly lenient. Assessment was rarely severe, but cases were seen when the adherence of low achieving candidates to the set brief had not been given sufficient reward. There were cases where higher marked candidates had deviated from the theme in a 'personal creative journey' and had been marked leniently.

- Generally assessment was consistent across the moderation sample, although leniency was sometimes more pronounced at the top end of the marks scale.

- In some cases the assessment grid front sheets (portfolio index sheets) were well used and aided the moderation process greatly.

- Assessment grid annotation was often informative and helpful in the location of evidence. However, some were hastily completed, with just the scores and no comment to justify decisions.

5301 (Unit 1): 2D and 3D visual language
5302(Unit 2): Materials, Techniques and Technology

- Work for *MusicMAX* played a significant part in the evidence for Units 1 and 2.

- Some centres focussed almost exclusively on art, at the expense of craft and design intentions and applications, restricting mark potential. A close similarity to Single Award approach is still noted in a few centres.

- 3D visual language was very much underplayed, in some centres; others now produce a reasonable balance of 3D work. In a few centres, work with glass and metal were exemplary.

- Too many projects set in some centres, causing time management issues and a lack of breadth and depth of study.

3- 5301 (Unit 1): 2D AND 3D VISUAL LANGUAGE

Unit 1 Assessment Evidence

Use a range of primary and secondary sources and explore visual language

- Some centres had successfully used primary sources to build and refine observational drawing skills, linked directly to the understanding of formal elements, at the start of the programme and within subsequent projects. Others demonstrated little evidence of good teaching of drawing.

- Digital photography supplemented observational drawing to collect primary source evidence. Sometimes transcriptions of photos wasted time and failed to move ideas forward. However, some photos were well considered and much more than mere 'snaps'.

- Secondary source work often consisted of numerous 'artist studies' in inappropriate materials, which generated little evidence for this unit. In some centres, however, contemporary and commercial sources enhanced projects.

- Copied irrelevant biography still overshadowed comment about others' visual language. This deficiency in approach was very often not recognised at assessment.

- The use to which both primary and secondary sources were put in the development of ideas was still lacking in many portfolios. The collection of sources was sometimes treated almost as a discrete activity that could be discarded once done. Many candidates chose just one, rather than combining sources to achieve aims.

- Formal elements, even when introduced in exercises at the start of the programme, were rarely referred to with fluency later on. The 2D emphasis was very evident here. Where visual language was analysed, the analysis rarely extended to 3D.

- The provision of trips to galleries and museums (both local and national) to inform research was noted and were generally of considerable value to all units.

- Visits from practitioners, such as glass workers, sculptors in metal and ceramicists remained the best way to convey the meaning of visual language and its use to candidates.

Use combinations of formal elements, mark-making and object-making and use drawing to develop ideas and intentions

- The fulfilment of 'the use of combinations of formal elements' was largely implicit within work. The candidates themselves rarely recorded

awareness of having used combinations of formal elements with intention.

- A wealth of 2D materials was used to explore mark-making. Both dry and wet media were utilised extensively.

- The range of abilities in drawing, especially from observation, was extremely wide, both below and above that expected for this level of qualification.

- Sketchbooks and other developmental vehicles were often very good, and sometimes took on the character of genuine working documents, where ideas were devised and tested. However, there was still a lot of unnecessary decoration, contributing little to the real development of ideas and the exhibition of visual language.

- There was a better 2D/3D balance this year, as centres developed strategies to cope with time and storage constraints for 3D. Opportunities for carving on a small scale in easy to work materials (soap, candle wax, Oasis, balsa) were still underused, however.

- Some centres had fallen back on introducing 3D as the brief of choice for Unit 3 to make up a shortfall in 3D work, an unwise choice.

- Access to good ICT facilities continued to improve.

Identify formal elements, and techniques used in work candidates have studied and describe how others have used visual language

- Assessment Strand 3: Others' use of visual language, for Unit 1, was often much better addressed than the equivalent Strand in Unit 2: Others' use of materials, techniques and technology. References to the work of others were widespread and often appropriate; but in many cases have again suffered from problems noted in previous years, namely:
    - fine-art focussed
    - historical and often hackneyed references rather than accessible contemporary practitioners' work.
    - much irrelevant biographical detail
    - direct copying from the internet and books
    - failure to analyse visual language in others' work
    - a 'contextual studies' approach, where 'artists' are seen as sources for pastiche, or direct copying
    - lack of imagination in the choice of sources or presentation of findings

- Skills-building workshops with local practitioners to extend the portfolio of skills and approaches provided the best and most meaningful evidence, often on the form of case studies. A few centres forgot to record evidence for these valuable activities.

- A few centres, were <u>still</u> not achieving an appropriate balance between investigations in 2D and 3D visual language. Mark-making in various combinations was often skilful, lively and varied but the same attention was not given to the development of object-making techniques and analysis of their visual qualities.

Demonstrate use of visual language and show how visual language has developed candidates' ideas

- Often, final outcomes were decided too quickly. Refinement of ideas in the final stages of a project were often not given due consideration.

- In workshops with practitioners candidates could observe demonstrations, be informed first hand of the thought processes that underpinned the practitioner's progression of ideas and question both practical and aesthetic considerations of the process. This understanding could then be channelled into their own work with genuine understanding.

- Some centres were still clinging to a fine art, or a 2D bias, or both. The application of ideas within craft and design contexts was lacking or underdeveloped.

Assessment

- Assessment of this unit was often seen to be accurate to slightly lenient, sometimes significantly lenient, but rarely severe.

- Moderators noted leniency across all strands in different centres, but strands 3 and 4 were most often cited.

- Comment on assessment grids was either too brief, too general, or just occasionally of great value.

- In some cases the assessment grid front sheets (portfolio index sheets) were well used and aided the moderation process greatly.

5302 (Unit 2): MATERIALS, TECHNIQUES AND TECHNOLOGY

Unit 2 Assessment Evidence

Explore 2D and 3D materials
Use tools, equipment and technology in an art, craft or design context
Produce responses and ideas in a range of media

- Most centres made a big effort to encompass a good range of 2D. There was a broad variety of materials, techniques and technology evident. There were some traditional as well as experimental darkroom techniques including photograms, which proved very successful. There was also a variety of printing including mono, screen, litho, collograph, lino and etching. Paper making, stitched, printed and dyed textiles and batik were presented as well as some part/whole costumes and hats. There were also some more experiment techniques evident, such as drawing wax with a hot iron, and some great image manipulation using a photocopier.

- Fine art was still heavily prevalent for 2D work, and fine art/craft for 3D. Some design work was simplistic by comparison, but introducing an awareness of the design considerations of function and fitness for purpose was a valuable exercise.

- 3D materials, tools, equipment and technology were under-represented in most portfolios, with very little experimentation of 3D materials and techniques. Evidence of small scale samples, models or maquettes during the development of 3D work was limited. The majority of final 3D outcomes consisted of just the finished piece.

- However, in some centres that seemed to have no better resources to most of the others, there was widespread use of a variety of 3D materials, tools and techniques, proving that criteria can be well covered. This year some cases of laser cutting guided by CAD drawing were seen. Although this can lead to visual sterility, it has been used creatively and with remarkable freedom. Work in Mod-roc, glazed or painted ceramics, card modelling, box dioramas, manipulation of Perspex, wire, plastics and found objects was seen. Some centres were very ingenious in the materials they used. One centre, very short on budget, regularly raided skips, bins and junk shops for materials, and these determined the projects. There was even a 3D project using soil, mud, branches, twigs and turf. It is clear that inspired 3D can be taught on a tight budget. Installations were more popular than in previous years, with shadow puppet theatre, ingenious hand made light fittings in mock rooms, table settings and outdoor sculptures playing more of a role. There was also some use of decorated boxes, to collect and display found objects in, as a personal self portrait.

- Centres are reminded that storage is not an issue with 3D outcomes for this qualification. Photographic evidence, conveying the scale of the piece, is permissible for moderation.

- The need to demonstrate that candidates have used materials and tools <u>safely</u> seems on the one hand to be ignored, and on the other to have become overstated, not providing relevant evidence that candidates have actually worked safely, which is what the assessment grid asks for. Some centres presented materials/tools/processes matrices, which list materials, etc. that have been used, and then show columns for properties, potential, limitations, and safety considerations. This is a good working system. Witness statements also have great value; handouts have no value.

- 'Photoshop' was commonly used in the development of many assignments; improving the quality and presentation of the work. More centres were using good art and design software packages as another tool to develop their work.

- Teachers continued to state that they had little access to vocationally-relevant resources sited within other departments in the centre.

Identify, in writing or visually, how others use materials and techniques

- Many assessors seemed to think that this is satisfied by any reference made to others' work. Most techniques described were 2D rather than 3D. Big oil paintings copied in pencil crayon are not relevant evidence; often candidates seemed totally unaware of the size of work and materials actually used. This is why participation in specialist workshops with an artist/designer practitioner and outings to galleries and museums are essential. Where focus was seen on how other artists and craftspeople had used materials, techniques and technology, more able candidates had produced written responses in their own words. However, many candidates had relied on books and the internet.

- The inappropriate use of materials sometimes highlighted a lack of understanding of others' use of materials, techniques and technology, when no explanation was given as to what a candidate's prototype structure would be made of in reality. Occasionally, however, results were impressive, well finished and well justified.

- Work placements are not a requirement of this qualification, but in some instances were used to their fullest potential to investigate the work of others, for which centres are commended.

Comment on how you have used materials and techniques

- Candidates own use of materials, techniques and technology had been mainly recorded in sketchbooks, sometimes as storyboards, with many candidates using the correct technical terms. These were better than explanations about others' use. Many centres encouraged a step-by-step approach, complete with diagrams, photos and evaluations of outcomes. Several centres had identified this aspect of the course as a weak area and had marked work accordingly.

Assessment

- Generally assessment for this unit was slightly lenient. However, a few centres were severe, particularly at the lower end of the marks scale. A common leniency was in strand 3, referring to the identification/explanation of how others use materials, techniques and technology. Many centres rewarded candidates quite generously for this, for little more than a pastiche copy of a piece of famous artwork.

- Some assessors seemed to have some rather low standards regarding skill. Achievement at the top of Mark band 2 rather than Mark Band 3 was more realistic for some candidates.

- The use of assessment grids varied. In the majority of centres they had used the grids correctly – providing good comments to justify the marks they had awarded. Others had made very vague general comments which took time to read, but did not aid the location of best evidence.

5- Conclusion

- Units 1 and 2 were well integrated in assessment activities and were most commonly delivered in the form of projects. This is not an explicit requirement for Units 1 and 2; the specification does not call for it, but it seems to be the most manageable way for teachers to incorporate a range of experimental activities and provides cohesive evidence as well as acting as a rehearsal for Unit 3.

- Few changes were seen this year to the delivery in individual centres. Very often the same briefs have been used for several years, and little modification has taken place in response to feedback by moderators and in the Examiners' Report. However, some centres were a hub of adventurous and exciting work, embracing contemporary professional practice, and were a pleasure to moderate.

- The MusicMAX project contributed well to Units 1 and 2. This aim sometimes blurred the focus of the vocational brief, with additional workshops introduced to extend the range of evidence rather than to move the project forward. However, there was less evidence of centres

producing outcomes for more than one of the briefs, without selecting and justifying one of them as the chosen outcome for the client.

- The issues regarding time allocation for Unit 3 continue. The delivery of Unit 3 as an examination is counter-productive. The time needed by individual candidates to fulfil their creative aims varies enormously and setting a time restriction does not reflect vocational practice. Time spent on assessment strand 4 will benefit candidates of all abilities.

- The growing use of local practitioners to lead workshop activities was commendable and captured the true vocational essence of the qualification.

- Many teachers expressed regret to moderators over the ending of the qualification in 2010. They felt that it has enhanced their own teaching as well as candidates' learning.

6- Statistics

Unit 1 (5301) – 2D and 2D Visual Language

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Raw boundary mark	46	41	36	32	26	21	16	11
Uniform boundary mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

Unit 2 (5302) – Materials, Techniques and Technology

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Raw boundary mark	48	42	36	31	26	21	16	11
Uniform boundary mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	6

Unit 3 (5303) – Working to Project Briefs

Grade	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Raw boundary mark	47	42	37	32	27	22	17	12
Uniform boundary mark	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20