

Examiners' Report Summer 2010

GCSE

GCSE in Applied Art and Design (2301)

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1- INTRODUCTION

This is the final Examiners' Report for the GCSE in Applied Art and Design. The final moderation series took place in May/June 2010 and the qualification has now been withdrawn. Please note there will be no re-sitting of units in 2011.

Even though the Examiners' Report will not be of use to the continued development of this qualification, it will explain why marks may have been adjusted and raise points of interest to centres continuing with their provision of vocational education by way of other programmes.

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*.

Further feedback will, of course, be provided in individual reports to centres that have been moderated this series. These are available online; they are not sent out to centres as hard copy.

1.1 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.

No teacher training events were held in the last year of the qualification but teacher-assessors were able to access the 'Ask the Expert' scheme during the year from the Edexcel website homepage : By emailing their queries and problems direct to the Chief Examiner, they received an answer within 48 hours.

Throughout the year the Edexcel website carried the Specification plus an addendum, the assessment grids and the 2009 Examiners' report.

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

1.2 Structure of the Qualification

The GCSE in Applied Art and Design (Double Award) was comprised 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 was 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, was assessed

on the basis of a project undertaken in response to Edexcel's given theme and choice of briefs.

Evidence from Unit 3 contributed to Units 1 and 2, as it employed a combination of Visual Language and Materials, Techniques and Technology. Where the work for the externally-set assignment was the pinnacle of achievement, this contribution could be very significant and justified allocating the project **more time than the required minimum of 30 hours**. Given that Unit 3 was equally weighted to Units 1 and 2, it was only reasonable that a very substantial amount of time should be dedicated to it, especially as work could be carried across as evidence for Unit 1 and 2. This was not in itself a guarantee of success, but resulted in a much more cohesive response and was strongly recommended. The Paper took the form of an externally-set project. It was not an examination. There were no set hours for preparation work or the making process.

1.3 Assessment Evidence

The sole vehicle for assessment of Unit 3 was the externally-set project; the vocational showcase of the qualification. This year the theme was 'Fantastic Food'. The timescale for delivery was left to individual centres' discretion, but a minimum of 30 hours work was required. There was no upper time limit, but the assessment deadline had to be met - reflecting vocational practice.

Evidence for Unit 1 and Unit 2 was sourced from anywhere in the portfolio - including the Unit 3 externally set assignment. A holistic approach to delivery was always encouraged.

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 'Fantastic Food' project this was not a problem in higher marked portfolios, though evidence was sparse or non-existent in weak submissions.

A focus on work *'inspired by the shapes, forms and detail of food, including the organic forms of fruit, vegetables, fish and animals, and the artistic forms achieved in food presentation'* was required for the 'Fantastic Food' project. These could be everyday or out of the ordinary, from anywhere in the world (but not the packaging of food or ready meals.)

Where this focus was not apparent it restricted marks.

Also within the 'Fantastic Food' project, the absence of the specific vocational requirement, the A2 presentation board or digital equivalent, precluded candidates from achieving in Mark Band 3 for assessment strand 4.

1.4 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).

Alternatively centres could enter their marks electronically and provide the moderator with a print-out of these.

Authentication Forms had to be signed by all candidates and teacher. Missing forms or signatures caused a problem in only a few centres. These were sent on to the moderator after moderation.

As the system for moderation of the GCSE 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. This caused few problems.

2. UNIT 3 (5303): WORKING TO PROJECT BRIEFS

- The 'Fantastic Food' project proved very popular this year. Only a few centres were unhappy with it as they had already delivered earlier Organic Forms briefs. Some built on this experience and turned it to their advantage. Most centres embraced it to the best of their ability.
- The theme of 'Fantastic Food' was supplemented by a scenario relating to a TV production company's quest for material for their new TV series. It encompassed food festivals, markets, restaurants and cafés. A variety of options within the brief catered for many specialist pathways across art, craft and design. Centres were expected to work to their strengths and not to deliver new skills within the project. It was also anticipated that they offer opportunities to inspire the candidates and enhance their work, either by providing suitable research sources, by taking them on relevant trips to galleries, museums, (markets, shops, restaurants and leisure centres this year) or by inviting contemporary practitioners into school.
- Within cohorts some individual candidates wandered from the theme and set scenario. Fast food and packaging was prohibited in the Paper, but was seen occasionally at moderation. Some higher marked candidates had taken the main theme, but then embarked on their own 'personal journey', ignoring the individual options, which was mistakenly applauded by the centre.
- The Paper should be given in its entirety to the Candidates, but it was common for this not to be done. It cannot be stressed too strongly that success in this unit depended 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. The Candidate Checklist, a formal requirement of the brief, was very often ignored by centres. Quite often this year it was absent across whole cohorts - so responsibility for this deficiency was with the teachers not the individual candidate.
- 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.
- Evaluation and display of the work, as if to a client, is of major importance. This year a definite vocational requirement was the A2 presentation board, showcasing the final outcome for the client. New this year was the

information about the client, such as 'Your client is the restaurant owner', which varied from option to option. Some centres responded to this, for example, by visiting local restaurants, talking to the owners/managers and even inviting them to the final presentation of work. Others ignored it completely.

- Assessment was often lenient, (though usually fair regarding skill). Each of the 4 assessment strands carry the words 'to/of a brief', meaning the set brief, and every stage of the work should reflect this. An example of this leniency was seen when candidates did not complete an A2 presentation board (or digital equivalent), or took the opportunity to cram as much text and developmental work onto it as possible, contrary to instructions in the Paper.
 - The high points of this qualification, and Unit 3 as much as any unit, is in the interaction with contemporary practitioners, and the putting of school-based activities within the wider context of the world of work by involving real-life (or role-play) clients. This benefits the teacher-assessors just as much as the candidates, as many have no experience of professional practice.
 - In a similar way, the notion of professional presentation through the A2 presentation board (or a series of postcards last year), a PowerPoint presentation or an oral critique is new to many teacher-assessors, and it is hoped that this good practice will continue.
 - 'Rehearsals' for Unit 3, in the form of vocational projects (sometimes past Papers such as 'Totally Trees', 'MusicMax' or 'Segments, Sets, Sequences') were seen in some centres. This resulted in candidates often working with a greater familiarity of the needs of a brief for 'Fantastic Food'.
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3. UNIT1 (5301): 2D AND 3D VISUAL LANGUAGE

Produce work in response to a brief

- The expectations were for a cohesive project, geared as if to a client. This should start with both primary and secondary research, which is then used to develop ideas and produce a final outcome within the constraints of the brief. Experimental work, media investigations and design alternatives can contribute to marks as the whole range of work produced is taken into account. However, candidates must choose to fulfil one option only - attempting more than one did not gain extra marks, and often diluted the focus of the work.
- Moderators reported an enthusiastic response to 'Fantastic Food'. Many centres responded appropriately to the project, adhering well to the client's requirement that the work must be inspired by *'the shapes, forms and detail of food, including the organic forms of fruit, vegetables, fish and animals, and the artistic forms achieved in food presentation'*. Responses were generally personal and less prescriptive this year. In most cases candidates produced highly individual final pieces.
- Occasionally it was not the pinnacle of candidate performance, (due to poor time management on the part of centres and/or individual candidates) and in some cases although the work produced reflected the theme of food, there was no 'Fantastic' factor. A lot of work seen was mouth-wateringly luscious, well-executed and very appropriate for the chosen option.

- By far the most popular option was the Art brief for a painting or series of paintings to adorn an upmarket restaurant, followed closely by the organically shaped relief wall piece for a new café. These were often very skilful and commercial, taking the word fantastic to mean exceptionally good. In fact, all options were seen at moderation; confirmation that they were all appropriate and feasible for this level of qualification and candidate. 3D outcomes were more prolific than in previous years, with jewellery and festival hats being popular options, as were centre pieces for tables.
- In a few cases, the project was used to generate 3D evidence to rectify a deficit in Units 1 and 2, resulting in candidates using new materials and techniques - against the recommendations of the Paper.
- The candidate response to a 'range of work' was less prolific this year in terms of varied 'trial' activities (assessment strand 3). However, some centres still tended to include a print workshop, although these were almost never utilised in the development of the final outcome. Fortunately, many responses were singularly focussed on one option, either from the start, or after the evaluation of preliminary research.
- Although many centres responded with accuracy and eagerness, not all centres and candidates found certain aspects 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, as follows:
 - The clearly-defined vocational requirement for 'an A2 presentation board (or digital equivalent), of the Final work created from visuals, photographs, photocopies or scanned images and enhanced by annotation to explain to the client the attributes and fitness for purpose of the final piece' was occasionally absent, or the wrong size, or used to cram developmental work, health and safety information and evaluation of process into a small space: Sometimes without a picture of the final outcome!
 - Some centres allowed individual candidates to deviate from the theme. Fast food and food packaging were seen, usually in lower marked candidates' work. Sweets were often drawn in a prescribed exercise. It is hard to see how these could fit into any of the given option scenarios.
- Some centres enlisted the help of a practitioner to work with the candidates, inspiring a strong response.

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

- This is the final time this criticism will have to be made! It is the one point on which there has been little improvement over the lifetime of this qualification. Although most centres realised the importance of this unit and allocated adequate time for delivery, there was a continued insistence in many centres on setting a final 'exam'. (This tended to be 10 hours maximum, insufficient for the final making process.) The candidates referred to it throughout the project as the exam. This does not represent vocational practice. 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. Often, some very promising initial ideas were constrained or rejected in favour of a rather obvious solution.
- 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. Several centres used the Candidate Check list from the Paper, and some went even further, elaborating on it with detailed time planning and materials schedules. These latter tended to show a very successful grasp of the project's development. 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 get the projects off to a strong start.
- In a few centres there was little evidence of candidates taking any responsibility for planning their own timescale. Marks seemed to be awarded on whether candidates kept to the teacher's timetable. 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.
- The progress made last year in using ICT to enhance submissions continued. PowerPoint presentations were often used, either to explain and evaluate use of materials, to cover the safety aspect of the work, to show work 'in situ' or to inform the client of the attributes of the work. The use of canvases for paintings was the norm, and the standard seen in painting in particular was often outstanding. Within the carnival hat option textiles/millinery techniques were used to excellent effect to produce the actual item, rather than just a mock-up. In accordance with established convention in this qualification, all hats were tried on by the moderator. Although not a popular choice, the pavement art was well attempted using charcoal and chalks as requested.
- 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). Often exhibitions were set up for moderation by candidates themselves, but as this was after the assessment deadline it could not contribute towards marks.
- The requirement for the A2 presentation board, or its digital equivalent (see above), were prime constraints, and were met with varying degrees of success.

Collect primary and secondary source information

- The starting point of writing any Unit 3 assignment has always been the ready availability of primary sourced inspiration. This year candidates responded enthusiastically by visiting local food markets, shops and restaurants to photograph fruit, vegetables, fish, meat and the way in which these were presented. In the studio still life arrangements were set up to inspire; fruit and vegetables were brought into class for Arcimboldo-style workshops and some lucky candidates were able to make their own cakes or ice cream sundaes to photograph, draw and consume. This all made for some lively starting points, but there were still centres in which primary research was lacklustre and uninspiring. Red peppers are truly wonderful structures, as are kiwi fruit and apples, but they do have their limits, especially if they have been previously used in an earlier 'Organic Forms' brief. This possibility had been recognised during the writing of 'Fantastic Food', and many different approaches and starting points had been identified to avoid the need for the repetition of images found elsewhere in the portfolios.
- Secondary sources were prolific - mostly comprised of internet images. Restaurant menus and other publicity material were collected and analysed to a certain degree for use in the graphic design option, but others' artwork and photographic images of food featured most. Often sources were not acknowledged. Fast food images and packaging made occasional appearances despite being prohibited in the Paper.

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

- At best there was a clearly defined synthesis between the research and development stages of the project. Photography was used to supplement observational drawing; of food presentation in restaurants and markets. Some photos were of an exceptionally high standard and were used to inspire fine art paintings.
- However, a very disappointing decision was made by some candidates - to reject all their primary sourced images, some high quality, which would ensure originality and individuality in the development of ideas - in favour of just one secondary sourced image from which they ultimately made a faithful 2D reproduction. Surely it is obvious that in doing this they precluded progression to Mark Band 3 in this strand? In real life this could lead to copyright issues and accusations of plagiarism. Some assessors seemed to miss the point that sources must be collected and then used. Fortunately other candidates, thoroughly engaged by the project, went on to creatively and successfully follow the design process, resulting in some lusciously mouth-watering outcomes.
- Visits to galleries, shops, food markets, restaurants and leisure centres were undertaken by many centres, which was commendable.
- All centres had looked at some artists, designers and/or craftspeople. Centres that had prescribed specific artists' work at the start of the project produced less individual outcomes. Those that had encouraged candidates to find art work relevant to their chosen brief demonstrated more imaginative use of visual language. Some centres made excellent use of specialist practitioners, using them to give direct input to Unit 3 delivering workshops. In these cases the candidate response was strong and better use was made of this experience in informing the development of candidate work. A few centres used the list posted on the website as their starting point for internet research.

- Some candidates were very thorough, with annotation and evaluated ideas throughout, whereas in other portfolios there was little or no annotation and heavy reliance on visual imager, regardless of its quality.

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

- Mostly, there was a lot of industry evident, where a variety of materials, techniques and technology had been used to produce an imaginative range of outcomes. However, in some cases they were not always made to meet the requirements of the brief. These included the making of tableware and models of chefs, as well as a computer generated design for a state of the art café and a painted landscape for an upmarket restaurant. There were also some 'food issue' inspired outcomes that despite being skilfully produced, didn't meet the requirements of the brief illustrating social causes like anorexia and obesity rather than 'the shape, detailof food'.
- Some centres excelled in specialist techniques and encouraged the cohort to follow the brief that best utilised centre strengths. In these centres, materials, techniques and technology were used with a high level of skill and sketchbooks often documented the 'making' process with good use of specialist language, diagrams, story boards as well as ongoing evaluative commentary.
- Health and safety was often inherent in the work, particularly when describing 3D processes. Safe working practice was understood and evidenced by most, and some did this creatively (using cartoon characters, symbols and spot the difference techniques).
- Some centres failed to encourage any reference to safe working practice at all. (The references could be in other parts of the portfolio, but the techniques referenced should be relevant to those used in this project, and their 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, across many disciplines.
- It was rare to see the use of a recognised scale to convey actual measurement, though some brave attempts were seen in the market stall and TV show set options, 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 and evaluate process earlier in the project, linking it to Health and Safety, to support practical evidence for assessment strand 2. The evaluation can then focus on the candidates' response to the brief. 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 was the degree of practical skill in meeting the requirements of the brief.
- Video presentations by candidates had improved this year. Although there was substantial reference to how the work had been produced, the opportunity for 'selling' the final work to the client was much better understood and attracted high marks.

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 A2 presentation board (or digital equivalent) requirement was moderated here. Some centres made excellent use of this distinct requirement to really 'sell' their outcomes. Candidate pride in their work was often evident. Misinterpretation of the requirement 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. This is one skill that centres can confidently carry forward to new qualifications.
- Another requirement considered here was the showing of work - such as the market stall, pavement art, paintings and relief pieces - as if *in situ*. This also contributed to the range of work produced. Access to Photoshop-type image manipulation seemed greatly increased. Occasionally as one of the last tasks of the brief, it was ignored. Very few centres encouraged candidates to consider the actual size, scale and dimensions of their outcomes where maquettes had been made.
- Some candidates had been photographed or videoed presenting work to centre staff, as if to a client. Occasionally a real-life client had been invited. Some witness statements were presented to supplement photos and video evidence.
- Some exhibitions of work from parent evenings 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.
- The poor time allocation seen in previous years, with the final outcome being produced as an exam piece within the GCSE exam period, continued. Candidates then had no classes left to attend to bring their submissions to a suitable conclusion with marks in assessment strand 4 being constrained.
- The requirement for the presentation 'as if to a client' was clearly conveyed. The notion was that in a selection process the A2 presentation board, or its digital equivalent, would be all that the client would see of the work. It is common practice for the original work not to be sent off initially. Those centres that focussed on the final outcomes, and presented them boldly, with annotation relating solely to their attributes and fitness for purpose, produced some exceptionally strong results. Sadly, some centres gave little guidance to the candidates, or misunderstood the requirements. Moderators had been directed that no A2 board, or digital equivalent, should preclude marks in MB3 for that strand.

- In addition to the A2 board written evaluations as if to a client were seen. Interesting approaches to evaluation included a letter to the client or spoof newspaper/magazine reports. PowerPoint presentations often took the place of the A2 board, and were also used to record aspects of the design process. There were those centres, however, that just churned out the same 'I did this, then I did that' report that did not address the needs of the client or the unit. This restricted the mark for strand 4 and reflected the lack of vocational awareness shown throughout the project.
- The Candidate Checklist supplied in the Candidates' Paper, was a formal requirement but was absent from many portfolios moderated. High achieving candidates, however, often kept a journal or weekly time plans, which were constantly monitored and evaluated.

Assessment

- Most centres presented candidates' whole portfolios, with Unit 3 clearly indicated. Some failed to do so, and did not adequately label the Unit 3 work. A few centres were effectively doing the qualification for the first time, in some the previous teachers had left and their successors had little clear idea of how to assess or present work. One such centre tried to divide the portfolios into three separate units. A few centres provided virtually no 3D work.
- 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 very leniently.
- Generally assessment was consistent across moderation samples, 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. This was sometimes indicative of a confused understanding of the requirements of the unit.

5301 (Unit 1): 2D and 3D visual language

5302 (Unit 2): Materials, Techniques and Technology

- Work for 'Fantastic Food' 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 was still noted in a few centres.
- 3D visual language was still lacking in some centres. Others now produced a reasonable balance of 3D work. In a few centres, work with textiles, glass, found and natural materials and digital technology were exemplary. There was more use of animation than in previous years.

- Many centres used past Unit 3 briefs to base projects on, with 'Totally Trees' being particularly prevalent. Some centres still delivered too many projects resulting in a lack of breadth and depth of study. Some projects didn't always offer sufficient scope to fully address unit criteria, particularly 3D.

3. UNIT1 (5301): 2D AND 3D VISUAL LANGUAGE

Unit 1 Assessment Evidence

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

- Primary sources were evident. However, the development and subsequent use of them varied. Some centres had successfully used primary sources to build and refine observational drawing skills, linked directly to the understanding of formal elements within projects. There was certainly much evidence of good teaching of drawing. Others centres used observational studies as stand alone exercises, with few links to projects and little further development. Some centres evidenced poor teaching of drawing skills and in these centres there was often also a lack of emphasis on the importance of observational studies.
- Digital photography often supplemented, and in some cases replaced, observational drawing to collect primary source evidence. Often these photographs were seen as a 'stand alone' exercise and the resulting images were not always used in a meaningful way to develop or inform projects. Sometimes photos were well used and contributed well to the development of imagery and ideas. There was evidence in some centres that elements such as composition and lighting had been considered when taking photographs.
- Secondary source work often consisted of Google-type images. In many centres it was the case that Google imagery informed the final idea, rather than primary source research. This was supplemented by studies of the work of other artists. Often these were biographical internet print outs and of little value or use in informing or developing candidate work. Some centres made excellent use of local sources such as galleries and local historical/contemporary places of interest as well as artists, designers and crafts people. Live sources such as these certainly enhanced projects.
- Printed out or copied irrelevant biography and narrative often replaced candidate commentary about others' visual language. This deficiency in approach had very often not been recognised at assessment. Many centres listed the artists included in candidate work as assessment evidence, regardless of it being 'cut and paste'.
- 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.
- The teaching and subsequent use of formal elements was varied across the centres. Many centres introduced them in exercises at the start of the programme but with little subsequent use or development of them within project work. The emphasis was very much on the teaching of 2D formal elements, with little thought and analysis going into the use of 3D visual language.

- Visits from practitioners, such as print makers, animation specialists, textiles designers, glass workers, sculptors 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

- Many candidates used a combination of formal elements, mark making and object making, and this was largely implicit within work. There was more evidence of 2D rather than 3D use of formal elements to develop ideas. Object making was usually presented as 'one off' outcomes with little 3D thinking and experimentation beforehand.
- An impressive and broad range of 2D materials was used to explore mark-making. Both traditional dry and wet media were utilised extensively as were more unusual techniques such as gilding, the use of hot wax and drawing with stitch. There was also increasingly extensive use of Photoshop and digital media to create different painterly or textural effects.
- The range of abilities in drawing, especially from observation, was extremely wide, both below and above that expected for this level of qualification.
- Many centres encouraged candidates to use sketchbooks or loose presentation sheets to record the development of projects. In many cases, these were often well used and acted as a working diary of skills and ideas. In some centres there was still a tendency to 'decorate' work and this contributed little to the development of visual language or technique.
- There was a better 2D/3D balance this year with many centres making a brave effort to address previously noted deficiencies in 3D. Some centres chose to work outdoors using natural materials and landscape art within community projects also contributed well, with photographs of candidate work within the community to evidence this. The unit 3 brief *Fantastic Food* also generated some interesting 3D responses.
- Use of ICT continued to improve and expand, with most centres having access to good facilities. Most centres evidenced proficient use of Photoshop along with more prevalent use of PowerPoint to present work. There was also more evidence of the use of film and animation programmes. Some centres made good use of community based film and animation specialists/workshops and there was also evidence of involvement with professional documentary film makers. There was evidence of good use of story boards to develop ideas.

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

- The addressing of Assessment Strand 3: Others' use of visual language, for Unit 1 was problematic as was the equivalent Strand in Unit 2: Others' use of materials, techniques and technology. However, Unit 2 often benefited from specialist visitors or workshops who gave candidates valuable input. Such workshops were often well documented, providing detailed descriptions of others' use of materials, techniques and technology. In many centres references to the work of others were widespread and often appropriate; but in many cases centres still evidenced problems noted in previous years, chiefly:
 - 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
- As already described, workshops with local practitioners to extend and develop the range of candidate visual language and use of materials, tools and technology, provided the most meaningful evidence. A few centres forgot to record evidence for these valuable activities and during moderation would describe workshops not always documented in candidate work.

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

- It was still the case that final outcomes were decided too quickly. An idea for a final outcome would be latched on to early on in a project, with the subsequent linear development of this one idea. Ideas were not often as fully developed or refined as they could have been. Often this was due to the centre not allowing enough time for projects to develop, leading to the early consolidation of ideas.
- 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.
- Many centres still worked to a fine art, or a 2D bias, however, there was increasing evidence of the use of local businesses or community based projects to inspire ideas within meaningful craft and design contexts.

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.
- The commentary on assessment grids was sometimes too brief or too general. Some centres, however, made good use of the grids where the commentary was of great value to accurate assessment and moderation.
- In some cases the assessment grid front sheets (portfolio index sheets) were well used and aided the moderation process greatly. Centres sometimes wrote down project titles along with the titles of skills workshops employed to help address these units.

- In rare cases the mark transfer from grids to Optems was inaccurate. In rare cases strand marks were added up incorrectly.
- In rare cases annotation on grids evidenced a lack of understanding of the strands, citing work that was non-rewardable as evidence.
- Centres also took into account work produced in response to Unit 3 when assessing work for this unit, as recommended.

4. UNIT 2 (5302): 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 evidenced a good range of 2D work. There was a broad variety of materials, techniques and technology evident. As well as traditional use of media and materials there was also evidence of more adventurous use of experimental and specialist media. These included gilding, encaustic art - hotplate work with wax, glass making and some inspired mixed media work involving imaginative use of materials such as metals and textiles. 2D textiles were further evident with some centres printing on T-shirts or banners, drawing with stitch and felt making. Printing was widespread, with a variety of techniques explored including mono, screen, litho, collograph, lino and etching. There was also wide spread and confident use digital photography in most centres, along with the use of Photoshop or similar digital image manipulation programmes.
- Fine art was still prevalent for 2D work, and fine art/craft for 3D, however, increasing numbers of centres took clear effort to incorporate design briefs which generated a more vocational response. Some centres used past Unit 3 briefs as project vehicles, and some used live briefs in response to community projects. Such an approach generated work that was more design focussed with an awareness of constraints and proved a valuable exercise in preparing for the delivery of Unit 3.
- The use of 3D materials, tools, equipment and technology remained disproportionate to the 2D work within many portfolios, with little experimentation of 3D materials and techniques. 3D work tended to be limited to final outcomes, with little evidence of prior experimentation in the form of smaller scale models, maquettes or simply 'trying out' with different materials. Some centres clearly had limited access to a range of 3D techniques and produced very basic Modroc or papier-mâché forms. Some centres relied heavily on one 3D medium, such as ceramics, with little exploration of any other 3D materials or processes.
- In some centres there was a braver approach with widespread use of a variety of 3D materials, tools and techniques. Work in Modroc and papier-mâché was still common and although in many centres the results were very basic, in some centres it was evident that these techniques had been taught well. The quality of ceramics similarly varied, and it was evident when a specialist practitioner had given input. Some of the ceramics seen were of a very high standard. Different ceramic techniques had been employed including, modelling, slab

forming, extruding, throwing and relief. Different firing and glazing techniques were also evident including raku and burnishing. In one case ceramics had been decorated with other materials prior to firing, such as nails. Card modelling was seen mostly on a basic level, but also with specialist craft practitioners making large scale card sculptures and paper lanterns. Box dioramas for animation sets and interior design projects were prevalent in many centres. Some centres used natural materials such as twigs, branches, stones and earth in landscape projects. One centre wove a decorative arch across a river using hazel as part of a community project. Textiles were sometimes used creatively especially in response to the Unit 3 brief 'Fantastic Food', where the responses included soft sculptures of large scale food such as buns and confectionary. Found materials, junk, metals, scrap and textiles were also used to create some imaginative sculptures.

- As recommended some centres presented photographic evidence of 3D outcomes that couldn't be stored, such as paper and card sculptures, landscape art and art that had been part of a live project and was located within the community.
- In many centres health and safety considerations were evident within portfolios. A number of centres used handouts which had little value, although many centres seemed to encourage written notes either in the form of study sheet with boxes to complete or note making within sketchbooks. Sometimes processes were described in step-by-step detail with notes relating to the safe use of materials and tools. Witness statements were also used in some centres. A small number of centres made no effort to demonstrate that candidates had worked safely.
- Photoshop was commonly used in the development of many assignments, along with the use of other similar digital programmes. PowerPoint was used to present work and film and animation was more prevalent than in previous years. Some centres also used art and design software for interior design, as well as graphics and typography. These were often seen to be used to a very competent standard.

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

- Some centres still seemed to think that any reference made to others' work would satisfy this. Copied notes or print outs from Google were commonly assessed as being adequate. When descriptions in own words were made it was usually in response to a specialist workshop. In these cases descriptions were honest, meaningful and relevant. Otherwise references were predominantly Fine Art and usually 2D. Some centres visited museums and art galleries, in these cases references to the work of others' usually contained more relevant and valuable information, more likely to satisfy assessment criteria.
- Many centres employed specialist practitioners to deliver workshops and the practical response to this was often to a good standard and the candidate response helped evidence a visual understanding of how others use materials and techniques. These workshops included ceramics, print, textiles, card modelling, glass making, film and animation, among others.

- Some centres involved themselves in community art projects with local artists, crafts people and designers, which also gave valuable insight into how others use materials and techniques. These included landscape art and graffiti.

Comment on how you have used materials and techniques

- Most candidates wrote about their own use of materials and techniques. Many wrote in step-by-step stages, illustrating their notes with diagrams and photographs. Some wrote in great detail evidencing a solid understanding of processes, whereas there was also evidence of very basic note making and a lack of depth of understanding, which was not always recognised at assessment.

Assessment

- Assessment for this unit was generally slightly lenient. A common leniency was in strand 3, referring to the identification/explanation of how others use materials, techniques and technology. Many centres rewarded candidates with generous marks for little more than a Google print out or pastiche copy of a piece of famous artwork.
- Sometimes the quality of the work produced was assessed enthusiastically as being at a higher level of skill than it actually merited. Achievement at the top of Mark band 2 rather than Mark Band 3 was more realistic for some candidates.
- The commentary on assessment grids was sometimes too brief or too general. Some centres, however, made good use of the grids where the commentary was of great value.
- In rare cases the mark transfer from grids to Optems was inaccurate. In rare cases strand marks were added up incorrectly.
- In rare cases annotation on grids evidenced a lack of understanding of the strands, citing work that was non rewardable as evidence.
- Centres also took into account work produced in response to unit 3 when assessing work for this unit.

5. CONCLUSION

- A variety of projects were used holistically to address the requirements of Units 1 and 2. Some centres used past Unit 3 briefs to deliver projects as they were found to be safe vehicles with which to address unit criteria and also acted as a rehearsal for Unit 3.
- Many centres relied on tried and trusted projects, making few changes to successful formulaic delivery. Nevertheless, within this the involvement with community projects seemed to be increasing and often briefs were geared towards local places, projects, events and practitioners, with centres becoming more appreciative of the benefits of working to a 'live' brief. Resulting work was often vibrant, exciting and had a more focussed meaningful edge that the Fine Art briefs often lacked.

- The 'Fantastic Food' project contributed well to Units 1 and 2. Some centres had an over- reliance on this to address the 3D element of these units.
- The issues regarding time allocation for Unit 3 continued, with some centres delivering it as an exam. The time needed by individual candidates to fulfil their creative aims varies enormously and setting a time restriction does not reflect vocational practice. More time spent on assessment strand 4 would have benefited candidates of all abilities.
- Many teachers expressed regret to moderators over the ending of this qualification. They felt that it has enhanced their own teaching as well as candidates' learning. The Senior Team would like to thank all the centres who have constructively built up their delivery of the programme since its introduction in 2002. We hope that the underpinning knowledge gained will facilitate easy transition to new vocational qualifications.

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

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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