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## Important notice to centres

As you will be aware the revised QCA subject criteria for GCSE Art & Design did not allow for the continuation of GCSE in Applied Art & Design in its current format, e.g. 3 units for the equivalent of 2 GCSEs. The purpose of this letter is to provide some insight as to why there is this change, clarify when the current Applied Art & Design will no longer be able to be offered, and to provide you with information related to alternatives that can be used in place of GCSE Applied Art & Design.

QCA stated that to achieve 2 GCSEs the candidate must complete double the amount of work to that for 1 GCSE. In addition merely completing double the amount of the same type of content was also not permitted. Therefore to gain 2 GCSEs, candidates would need to complete two endorsements, thereby creating 2 portfolios of art work and complete 2 Externally Set Assignments, one for each endorsement.

During the development phase we did consider adding an 'applied' endorsement within our GCSE Art & Design specification, but came to the conclusion that candidates could work in an applied manner for many of our endorsements, without our needing to set a tight brief. It was felt that this would not sit with the ethos of the rest of the endorsements, as we have found that teachers and candidates value the broad starting points of our Externally Set Assignment.

There is no GCSE in Applied Art & Design in the new suite of GCSEs for first teaching from September 2009 for Edexcel. Candidates should not be offered the Applied GCSE Art & Design from September 2009 as a two-year course, as the final assessment window will be in summer 2010, with no further assessment opportunities after that date. Centres who provide this as a one-year course may continue to offer in September 2009.

Centres who wish to offer a vocationally focussed qualification to their students are encouraged to consider switching to the Edexcel BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Art, which has a variety of different units covering all disciplines within Art, and is an excellent vehicle, specifically designed for this purpose. In addition it also carries the equivalence 2 GCSEs for reporting purposes, is included on Section 96 and provides an excellent springboard into higher level qualifications. However, centres should be aware that BTEC First is targeted at Level 2 and is therefore unsuitable for candidates who would expect to receive Grades D and below in GCSE. For such students, the BTEC Introductory (Level 1) qualifications will be more suitable.

Full information about these qualifications can be found here, together with information on how to become a BTEC centre. <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/firsts/Pages/default.aspx> In addition



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your Regional Curriculum Manager would be more than happy to take you through the simple steps required to enable your centre to offer a BTEC course if your centre is not already approved.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carla Fernandez', with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the signature.

Carla Fernandez

Qualifications Delivery and Award Manager- Art & Design