



**General Certificate of Secondary Education**

**Art and Design (Fine Art)**

**Coursework 3202/C**

**Report on the Examination**

*2008 examination – June series*

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*Dr Michael Cresswell Director General.*

## **GCSE Art and Design (Fine Art) 3202**

### **Coursework 3202/C**

Fine Art continues to be a very popular alternative to the Unendorsed course in many centres, with many candidates offered a wide range of materials and techniques to achieve their outcomes. Increasingly many centres are moving away from more traditional approaches and introducing further opportunities for experimentation, particularly with new media. Although there is still an emphasis in many centres on drawing from direct observation, with some stunning examples seen at the top end of the ability range, there continues to be a strong movement towards digital photography as the major means of recording. The dangers of an over reliance on this method were commented on in last year's report, particularly where such images are manipulated in a mechanical way through Photoshop and then used as the basis for final outcomes with no real evidence of personal development.

The majority of centres clearly provided candidates with a well-structured course that enabled them to achieve all four Assessment Objectives. The standard of work produced in most of these centres has continued to be very high, with some extremely impressive submissions in both two- and three- dimensions from the most able candidates. In many centres, candidates are encouraged to overlap and inter-relate the four Assessment Objectives into an exciting 'journey'. In others, each Assessment Objective has been treated separately throughout the course, at times leading to a lack of connection, particularly between investigation and outcome. Also, as in previous years, in centres where there has been too much teacher direction, candidates have clearly been restricted in their opportunities for genuine personal development.

Although drawing and painting have continued to dominate the coursework units in Fine Art, often referencing the work of well-known 20<sup>th</sup> century artists and art movements, some centres have begun to engage with new media and explore more contemporary sources and approaches. Work was often reinforced by well integrated visits to galleries and museums that usually targeted the work of relevant artists, through the use of worksheets, gallery guides and teacher input. There was also good evidence of the impact provided by artists-in-residence and, in some cases, visits to artists' studios.

Sketchbooks have continued to be an integral part of most coursework submissions with, as usual, some extremely impressive examples seen. In some cases, so much time and care has been taken over these sketchbooks that the production of a final outcome has been seen as an irrelevance. Moderators reported seeing superb sketchbooks, covering AO1, AO2 and AO3, but where the candidates have produced very disappointing outcomes for AO4. There have also been many instances of sketchbooks where the contents appear to be very 'rich', exciting and seductive, but which on closer examination reveal less impressive skills and an emphasis on the development of decorative effects using layers of texture and cut-and-paste techniques, often with images culled from secondary sources. It is noticeable that in many of these latter instances, the evidence of candidates' understanding of context was less than convincing. Similarly, there was often a lack of connection between this research and the development of personal ideas.

The benefits and dangers of the Internet as a resource have continued to be an issue this year. Where candidates have clearly been given help and advice on how best to search for relevant material, and, more importantly, where candidates have been encouraged to present their findings in forms that demonstrate their understanding, the experience has been extremely beneficial. Unfortunately, all too often, candidates fail to understand the need to restrict their search parameters, and end up being bombarded with material that is frequently visually restricting to their own ideas. This is especially the case where candidates are researching

issues based units of work, where the material may not only be inappropriate, but can, in some cases, be quite disturbing.

### **Mark ranges and award of grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.