

Version



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2012**

**Art and Design – Fine Art 42022**

**(Specification 4202)**

**Unit 2: Externally Set Task**

***Report on the Examination***

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## GCSE Art and Design (4202)

### General

It has been another successful year in which centres embraced the flexibility and diversity of the GCSE Art and Design Specification within each endorsement. Many centres developed new courses that accommodated a variety of teaching approaches and were tailored to suit available facilities, staffing strengths and creative enthusiasms, as well the needs of students. In other centres, courses similar to those used during the legacy specification were retained.

Teacher Standardisation allayed any uncertainty about the requirements of the 'new' specification, and as a result many courses have become more holistic and less rigid or linear in design. Examples included initial skills-based experiences allowing students to investigate such things as the use of materials for different purposes; specific visual elements; mark-making and sources of design. Workshop-style approaches allowed students to build up a bank of skills in readiness for extended collections of work or projects, designed to show coverage of the four Assessment Objectives. Even where all students followed the same project, moderators reported evidence of much more diverse journeys of enquiry and personal responses building on confidence gained during the introductory phases of their courses of study.

Unit 1 portfolio work showed appropriate and well-structured responses to the Assessment Objectives. Moderators reported a good range of tasks evident in projects across the endorsements. Themes were wide-ranging and varied from familiar schemes based around the natural world, portraiture and landscape, to issues-based topics and individual assignments based on students' personal interests, identities, cultures and beliefs. Sources were, in the best instances, integrated within the theme and provided rich focuses for investigation, exploration, research and analysis. Past paper starting points featured extensively, and allowed centres to refresh the themes used with students on an annual basis instead of re-presenting the same projects year on year.

There were fewer reports of students experiencing visits to galleries and exhibitions, especially where travelling great distances was required. Some centres made better use of local visits, and there was evidence of extended "sources" being integrated into schemes and programmes of study, where local woodland, city centres, ports, harbours and seashores were used to engage students and inform the development of ideas.

Visiting artists made a valuable impact on some courses, to provide stimulus and lead workshops, involving activities such as life drawing, printmaking, 3D construction and the exploration of textile techniques.

Sketchbooks, working logs, ideas books, design sheets and mounted boards were all very much in evidence, each offering students a way of working and style of presentation that suited their individual needs. It was pleasing to see fewer cases of sketchbook pages or worksheets labelled as "recording"; "AO..."; "Artist Research" etc.

In some instances, sketchbooks were deemed to be "stunning examples" of how students had worked through the creative process and documented their thoughts, ideas and findings in a wide variety of visual means. In other cases, they were seen as problematic in terms of selection of work for moderation. Some students chose to select and mount up work from their books whilst others accepted that they represented a journey of personal development and maturity and presented them as that within their portfolio.

Some moderators highlighted 'selection' of work as an issue in a number of centres. It is a requirement of the specification that students present "a selection of thoughtfully presented work that demonstrates the breadth and depth of the course of study". In some cases no selection had taken place and work from the entire course was submitted, whilst in others there was too much, so submissions were sparse and disjointed.

In Unit 2, the unlimited preparatory time available was used by teachers to tailor the time to students' individual needs. It was the case that in a number of centres' students overlapped some weeks with

work for both Unit 1 and preparation for Unit 2. In others, students were given the maximum time available. Flexibility was deemed to be the key to success, by allowing centres to organise timing for the preparatory period and the 10-hour sessions to meet the wider needs of both the centre and the students.

The Externally Set Task papers for each endorsement were well received. It was evident, though, that some centres had restricted access to some questions from papers. Whilst there may be reasons why students might be guided in their choices, it is a contravention of Awarding Body rules if students are not issued with a full copy of the E.S.T. paper.

## **Teacher Standardisation Meetings**

Delegate feedback this year indicated that the distribution of a CD containing even more extensive 'visual reminders', as well as sections containing information about dates and deadlines, administration details, copies of important documents and links to specification materials, was very well received. The process is an on-going one; ideas and suggestions received have been taken on board, to continue to improve what is already seen to be a highly valued AQA resource.

The fundamental focus of each meeting was to illustrate standards by giving teachers the opportunity to see examples of 'live' work from each endorsement and both Unit 1 and Unit 2. "Training rather than testing" was one comment received following the decision not to collect in marks. The inclusion of an "anchor set" for the purpose of group marking in both the Training and Marking exhibitions was also unanimously welcomed. Reinforced at Teacher Standardisation, and used much more effectively by teachers during centre marking this year, were the terms "just", "adequate", "clear" and "convincing" for awarding differentiated marks within each Assessment Objective band.

The initiative for meetings to be hosted in schools and colleges was generally successful. Funding received for this was positively used by participating centres for a wide range of educative purposes. During moderation, samples used at previous Teacher Standardisation Meetings, illustrating different approaches within endorsement presentations, were seen to have influenced both portfolio work and responses to the Externally Set Task. Teachers had, on occasions, encouraged students to move away from traditional responses and to integrate new materials or new ways of working with media. Soft sculptures to accompany work within Graphic Communication portfolios as well as three-dimensional presentations of photographic material were seen, and students had been more adventurous in their choice of media within three-dimensional design submissions.

## **Administration**

Administration was deemed to be good this year despite problems caused by national holidays. The majority of centres ensured that moderators received the necessary two copies of mark sheets by the 31 May deadline. This in turn guaranteed that centres received sample information in good time for visits and Area Moderation Meetings. Very few instances of missing or incomplete Candidate Record Forms or Centre Declaration Sheets were reported, and fewer cases of incorrect transference of marks were seen. Any occasions where administration was problematic were generally dealt with by moderators at the time.

Arranging dates and times for visits and meetings was reported to be increasingly difficult. It is hoped that more use will be made of e-mail in future to reduce the problems of contacting teachers during the school day.

## **Assessment and Moderation**

Marking each unit out of 80 is now established and in the majority of cases, marking was deemed to be fair and accurate. Where the assessment criteria were used regularly during teaching sessions, shared with students and seen as an integral part of the course, a familiarity with terminology and interpretation of requirements led to confidence in pitching marks accurately within bands. For some students, an emphasis on the language of art was started during Key Stage 3; this led to excellent foundations for GCSE courses and the coverage of Assessment Objectives.

Most centres had understood the process of sample selection across both units and the principle of marking and moderation taking place in numerical order from lowest to highest, regardless of whether they were portfolio or Externally Set Task samples. In the majority of cases, centres had taken on board the requirement for quiet and uninterrupted conditions for effective moderation to take place. Problems arose when work had been exhibited in areas that were difficult to access or samples had been poorly or incorrectly labelled. Whether samples are presented in folders of work or as an exhibition, or in some cases as electronic portfolios, ease of access is essential.

Area Moderation Meetings were generally successful and provided centres with an alternative moderation process.

## **Assessment Objectives**

Students are required to evidence all four Assessment Objectives in both Unit 1 and Unit 2. By using the terms “develop”, “refine”, “record” and “present”, students showed an understanding of the requirements in their submissions. A better understanding of the integration of the Assessment Objectives enabled a more flexible approach and evidenced more holistic submissions of work.

### **Assessment Objective 1**

Many subjects provided the starting point from which ideas were developed, including images; artists; craftspeople; artefacts; visits; materials and techniques. Evidence seen exemplified the breadth of sources that had been made available to students or that they themselves had selected. Relevant contextual influences informed very individual personal journeys of enquiry, and in the best examples, students independently discovered contemporary references that both enhanced and extended their work. Less successful submissions relied heavily on downloaded biographical narratives, much of which had been neither read nor understood and made little if any connection to the student’s own work. As a result there was little evidence of how work had progressed or ideas had been developed in relation to the findings.

### **Assessment Objective 2**

This was seen to be the most successful in some submissions and the least successful in others. The most successful students had accessed a wide range of media, materials, techniques and processes with which to progress and expand their developmental journey. Evidence of thoughtful review and refinement through clear and considered selection and rejection of media and processes was a prominent feature. Digital media had been used both to chart the progress of work and also to show discriminating changes and decisions made during 3D and textile construction, large-scale paintings and assemblage. In less successful cases, media, techniques and processes had been simply addressed by way of repeated images in a range of media and colour-ways with little evidence or reference to judgements or decisions made.

### **Assessment Objective 3**

Recording in its widest sense was seen this year. The cross-over between endorsements where students have used wide-ranging techniques and media manipulation to record ideas, thoughts, developments and outcomes, was noticeable. These took the form both of traditional drawing techniques through the use of graphite, charcoal and other dry materials, to drawing with wax, sand, glue and mud. Sewing machine stitching, carving and modelling, constructions in paper and card as well as printing and mixed media techniques were all used to record from both primary and secondary sources. Above all, digital recording was at the forefront as a tool to record progress, intent, development and realisation. The instant access to a visual record was used to excellent effect in the most successful submissions and offered a whole new dimension to the concept of recording. Highly rendered drawing still featured, as did drawing for design purposes and as personal responses to projects. Recording through annotation was in the best examples insightful and expressive whereas in other cases it was merely descriptive. In some instances, annotations were simply re-presentations of existing information copied directly from secondary sources such as the internet.

### **Assessment Objective 4**

In both Unit 1 and Unit 2, personal responses varied from well-executed and considered outcomes resulting from extensive exploration and development of ideas, to unrelated pieces that showed no links with the focus of study. Projects, assignments, briefs and starting points generated some exciting, innovative and inventive responses. These included collections of related work, large scale paintings, detailed and decorative books, story boards, textiles, sculptural forms, ceramics, mixed-media and digital displays by way of photographs, animation and show reels. Students responded to a range of critical and cultural sources in well-organised and reflective submissions where connections had been thoughtfully embedded in the work and materials had been chosen appropriately.

## **Fine Art 4202**

### **Unit 2: Externally Set Task**

The question paper was well received; centres felt that it offered appropriate starting points for students of all abilities by providing accessible named sources as well as scope for personal choice. Some strong responses were seen from students who were able to draw on their coursework experiences to inform their practice.

In most instances, students were clearly stimulated by the wide range of starting points offered in the question paper. The issue of unlimited preparatory time continues to be welcomed by centres and this has been exploited in various ways. However, the large amount of time allocated for preparation in one centre resulted in a student's Unit 2 submission containing considerably more work than that presented for Unit 1. Uneven levels of performance across the units were noted on some occasions where students had followed a one-year course of study. The resulting lack of time for Portfolio development had a negative impact on levels of attainment in Unit 1 when compared with those evident in Unit 2. This was also found to be the case where students were entered at an earlier age for the GCSE qualification than those in Year 11.

## Question Paper Starting Points

### Question 1 - Sense of Place

This was a very popular question with students of all abilities because it was seen to be so accessible in terms of primary sources. In many responses, students moved away from the named references to engage with contemporary sources. These included the work of John Virtue, Angela Wakefield, Eve Folks and Paul Catherall, as well as the 'street shots' of Martha Cooper and Keegan Gibbs. Each part of the question was attempted, although (a) and (c) generated the most responses. Some very good photographic studies of derelict, boarded-up buildings were seen and these had often been developed into very personal outcomes using digital media as well as layered, printed, cut paper, painted and relief materials. References were made to the derelict buildings in the work of John Piper and John Monks. Geometric interpretations of architectural structures and their stark features, recorded during site visits, were developed into oil paintings, as well as mixed media responses. Considerations included unusual viewpoints and compositions, as well as a sense of scale. Some students were inspired by examples of street art and produced new media-generated graffiti style response. However, these often appeared to rely on pastiche and rarely developed into very personal work.

One student combined the urban environment and Claes Oldenburg's theme of public installations using ordinary objects depicted on a monumental scale. Photo-shop techniques were then used to produce some engaging images of 'out of scale' domestic items in a street setting, with the student recording similarities in structure between the chosen item and the selected environment. A tapered stainless steel food grater was placed in a composition of tall glass and steel buildings, where the camera angle captured three-point perspective to increase the essence of height, whilst the pattern of the holes in the grater mimicked the walls of soaring windows rising into the sky.

The question also inspired issues-based responses, with the subject of privacy and surveillance noted in one student's submission. This was presented in the form of a 'Millennium Bridge' inspired installation that incorporated a canvas painting, time-lapse film and mock CCTV camera, with the stencilled message 'I've got my eye on you' to telling effect. A number of lower attaining students responded to '(c) natural environment' by simply copying landscapes from second-hand sources, with little or no personal interpretation. However, it was used effectively by others to develop ideas and personal responses, informed by an actual visit to a specific site or location. Rural, coastal and mountain settings all featured as source material, with visual experimentation seen in the application of paint as well as digital recording. One example had a series of images of a coastal location framed by driftwood, bound together with natural fibres. The seascapes of Maggi Hambling provided other students with contextual references for their work. Some interesting personal responses were seen where students had employed a range of media to explore qualities informed by the work of Goldsworthy, and dedicated sketchbooks provided evidence of research, refinement of ideas and experimentation with materials.

### Question 2 - Animals

Students from across the ability range responded to this question. Some studied family pets or farm animals. Others developed studies informed by visits to local wildlife centres or zoos. In many instances, students worked from primary sources, and digitally recorded imagery was utilised to good effect. Sources accessed included Egyptian representations of gods in the form of animals, and Australian Aboriginal dreamtime imagery, as well as Celtic lettering and Native American totems and masks. Works by Audobon and Erwitte were researched alongside those of Stubbs and Shepherd. Hockney's studies of his pet dachshund and Moore's drawings of sheep also featured predominantly as the stimulus for two-dimensional responses. Some students referenced and emulated the three-dimensional sculptural qualities, scale and media of artists such as Sophie Ryder, Heather Jansch and

Nicola Hicks. Decorative patterns found in fish scales, birds' feathers and animal skins were also used to good visual effect; a wealth of high quality recording was reported. Where there was a dependence on copied or traced secondary sources, predictable work resulted. Pastiche of the work of Rousseau, alongside copies of Franz Marc's work, evidenced little by way of individual development. However, where the dynamic forms and fragmented shapes of Marc's work were clearly understood by students and used as a source of composition, they generally provided a platform for success.

Some interesting individual interpretations were seen. One student depicted his pet lizard and referenced Escher's images of mechanical lizards as inspiration. The student's final response, executed in fine detail, took the form of a painting of the lizard, surrounded by prints of grasshoppers. Other examples included an Elliot Erwitt-inspired painting, where animal heads were morphed onto human bodies that were participating in everyday situations and an engaging installation of jars of 'pickled' sculptural forms based on studies of domestic fowl that had been initially inspired by a visit to the Natural History Museum and the work of Damien Hirst.

### **Question 3 - Contrasts**

This question proved to be one of 'contrasts' in its own right. It proved to be a popular choice in some centres, but was not used at all in others. It was seen to generate thoughtful responses in some instances and the best work was extremely well researched. In others, downloaded images resulted in cut-and-paste collages, often with an uncertain feel as to whether the students had really understood the question. Themes included loud and soft music; yin and yang; good and evil; young and old; war and peace; dark and light; half and half and rich and poor. Issues-based responses focused upon topics such as the London riots, the effects of eating disorders on the mind and body, as well as the contrast between affluence and poverty. Responses were predominantly two-dimensional. Some students used photographic methods to depict the contrasting surfaces of natural forms. Others produced highly rendered drawings and paintings reflecting a range of human conditions.

One example contrasted human and machine forms in combination. The response which was inspired by the surreal work of Giger, effectively integrated image and text in collaged form. Another student investigated the contrast – or lack of it – between twins, through large-scale portrait painting. The work of Rembrandt and Durer inspired contrasts between old and young, particularly focusing on faces and hands. For one student, the journey of ideas led to a final presentation in the form of a digital film inspired by Bill Viola's focus upon fundamental human experiences such as birth and death, and aspects of consciousness.

### **Question 4 - Dance**

Many students who were practitioners of dance, or passionate about the subject, chose this starting point. Almost all of the responses seen were from female students. Many images were sourced from the work of Lois Greenfield and Barbara Morgan, others were digital photographs taken of the students dancing or posing. Pastiche responses to the ballet studies of Degas were also commonplace. Very few students used the trigger suggestion of popular culture or music videos. In some submissions dance footwear, such as ballet pumps and in one instance, street dance sneakers provided the focus for close observational studies. The Futurist painters were a main source of inspiration for students experimenting with ways to portray movement; figure posture, clothing, lighting and colour were also explored in some responses. Photography techniques such as blurring were used to capture the action of dancers, whilst the photographs of Muybridge provided a useful reference point for students wishing to explore repetition. Explicit references were made to a wide range of cultural sources such as ballroom dancing and flamenco as well as traditional African, Asian, Native American and Russian Cossack dance forms. The question generated a wealth of investigations into sources and a lot of primary and secondary source recording. However, in many cases, insufficient refining or developing of ideas often led to predictable outcomes and static poses.

### **Question 5 - Messages**



The opportunity for students to make very powerful and personal statements about issues they felt strongly about generated some high quality responses to this question. Some very sophisticated ideas and personal concerns were effectively communicated through combinations of image and text, although some less able students tended to rely heavily on graffiti imagery and produced derivative work referencing practitioners such as Banksy. Quotes, sayings, catch phrases, song lyrics and powerful statements about a wide range of issues featured in many responses. Named sources as well as the work of Annette Messenger, Bill Viola, Otto Dix, Simon Norfolk, Robert Ryan and Kara Walker had provided inspiration. One student reflected upon modern forms of communication such as mobile phone texting and 'Facebook', and their potential negative uses including the trend for 'trolls' to comment on the misfortune of others through anonymous messaging. Mixed media collages, layered and manipulated digital images, film and photography responses were seen in addition to installation presentations.

Biblical messages were chosen by one student with a modern representation of the Jesus and Judas kiss in a painterly style. In this instance, referenced sources included the work of Edward Knipper, Audrey Flack and William Blake.

Certain students produced powerful responses which revealed a cathartic dimension. Teenage 'angst' associated with eating disorders, body image, bullying, isolation and poverty, as well as the drink and drugs culture, formed the basis for in-depth research and reference work. One student explored, "what it is like to be a teenage lad". Internet images relating to disputes, street gangs and riots were analysed through written and visual recording. In addition to the named sources, Tomi Ungerer's iconic advertising campaigns and political posters opposing the Vietnam War and the racial injustice of the 1960s were used to stimulate exploration of ideas and further research. In one case, nuclear disarmament, ecology and human causes stimulated a great deal of energetic and at times 'angry' mark making in response to these causes. In another, the films of Tim Burton inspired some powerful recording of 'dark' images and a resulting self-portrait made strong connections with the chosen sources.

In another submission, a sequence of canvases explored the development of a street disturbance stemming from last year's street riots. The personal response began with a realistic interpretation of a calm controlled figure walking in a cityscape and developed through the canvases into a multi-figured expression of anger with reference to the painterly style evident in the work of Jackson Pollock.

## **Question 6 - Composition**

Few students responded to this question, and it appealed largely to those of lower ability. Some chose still life and Surrealism, with references to the work of Salvador Dali and Andy Warhol; others used Mondrian and Cubism to develop more abstract work, and one student responded by using the varied architectural details of busy London streets as the source material. The choice of items for still life compositions usually revolved around easily accessible objects such as natural forms, shoes, make-up, perfume and nail varnish bottles. One student chose a self-portrait approach inspired by the paintings of Lucien Freud. A concern for different viewpoints was evident as was a desire to experiment with chiaroscuro and perspective. The outcome was a powerful and thought provoking, multi-faceted portrait painting of a teenager of many moods.

Another student used natural forms as the theme, with a focus upon the genre of 'Vanitas' paintings. Images of dying flowers, skulls and rotting food were studied in order to symbolise the brevity of life and inevitable death. 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> century works were studied as well as Cezanne's 'Pyramid of Skulls'. This approach provided an ideal direction for a technically competent student, skilled in mark making and the use of visual elements.

## **Question 7 - Traces**

Overall, this did not appear to be a popular question this year, but where it was selected, responses were varied and individual. Some started with the openness of (a) and then used suggestions from both (b) and (c) as their ideas were refined and developed.

(a) This question saw references to mystery, with ghostly traces of past people in old buildings and links to Rachel Gadsden and the Cane Hill project. Traces of burst bubbles and the remaining multi-coloured moisture featured in the work of one student, whilst another used digital photography to record the traces left of footprints in sand and their erasure by the tide. Some students depicted eroded, corroded or neglected surfaces. Traces of peeling paint, rust and plaster with exposed brickwork were painted with good use of materials such as tissue paper, tile adhesive and iron filings to create textural surfaces. One student had depicted butterflies with broken or fragmented wings on surfaces which had been layered with delicate colour. In places, only a trace of the butterflies could be seen. Items left or discarded were also considered, with one student making a subtly fictional annotated 'documentary series' of work about objects left in various places around the world during travels on holiday. This highly individual response included a strong narrative about the objects' owners and about travel experiences. Other responses included work based on fossils, bones and fragile organic forms. Ecclesiastical ruins, arches and towers were depicted, sometimes overlapping and with a degree of transparency. The use of water colour and acrylic washes were used to good effect.

(b) Responses seen to this suggestion were linked to students' investigations into their family history, incorporating significant photographs, letters and mementos. These were sometimes presented as boxes or small cases containing objects as well as through drawing and painting. War posters, military tanks, images from war reporters and photographs taken in the Imperial War Museum inspired one student to look at his family history and the impact of past conflicts on future generations. Scanning, multi-layering and mixed media techniques were well used, and another student explored traces of mankind, with references to the work of Hughie O'Donoghue, to bring together memories and dream-like sequences.

(c) In this suggestion, traces of architecture left by ancient civilisations such as the Romans and Greeks were referenced mainly from secondary sources; responses were simple and predictable. Two examples of Aztec pattern-based work were developed from the exploration of South American civilisations.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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