



General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course)
June 2012

Design and Technology: 45752

Short Course

(Specification 4575)

Unit 2: Design and Making Practice

Report on the Examination

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

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General

This year the Short Course specification attracted an increasing number of centres. Moderators saw a more consistent approach to the Controlled Assessment Tasks especially from centres where candidates were from KS3. The majority of these centres had chosen one set task and this led to a variety of outcomes which enabled candidates to successfully access the assessment criteria. Centres generally made it clear which of the Controlled Assessment Tasks candidates were using which was an improvement on previous years. Some centres included the chosen task at the start of the candidates' projects.

An even higher number of candidates were entered from KS3 this year, and whilst this continued to pose no problem for some centres, many entered projects that did not allow candidates to access the higher mark range due to a lack of maturity in the candidates approach.

Most centres have understood the importance of high quality photographs and candidates used digital photography effectively to record the stages of their work. A small number of centres provided poor quality photographs which made a visit by the moderator necessary.

The majority of centres had done well to encourage candidates to organise their folders, include relevant material and bind their design folders prior to marking, although a few centres did not do this. Annotation on the Candidate Record Form (CRF) was generally good and informative - where it was absent it was sometimes the cause of confusion regarding the nature of work contained in folders. Many CRF's were not completed in full, for example, missing candidate numbers. If unsure, centres should refer to the Guidance notes for Controlled Assessment or contact their Controlled Assessment advisor.

Most moderators reported that centres met deadlines whilst some reported that some centres despatched their work very late this year which significantly delayed the moderation process. This was further hindered by postal delays. Centres were generally good at making sure all the required paperwork was included and that folders were presented appropriately for moderation; treasury tags or flip-files seemed popular choices. However, some loose work continued to present issues for moderators and some time was wasted reorganising candidates work.

In general, the vast majority of centres moderated appeared to be assessing candidates work accurately. However, where this was not the case there was a significant difference which was based upon the marks for Criterion 2 and 3. Centres must remember that although this specification requires only half the amount of work, the Controlled Assessment must still be of a GCSE standard.

Investigating the Design Context

This was an area that was completed reasonably well, but some high marks continued to be given for quantity of research rather than quality of analysis and understanding of the task. Many schools included a client and consumer profile which was encouraging.

Once again there were several centres where candidates had submitted sheets containing printed material, unchanged or annotated, from the internet. This was not always acknowledged, did not appear to move the projects forward, and was irrelevant and unfocussed in many cases. Questionnaires again appeared in a few folders and these generally failed to have any useful impact upon the outcome.

Many centres had encouraged candidates to make good use of strategies to analyse products. These were of a much higher value when candidates looked at 'real' products, although many continued to use internet sourced photos of products to analyse. Research on irrelevant materials and manufacturing processes were also of little value.

Candidates should be encouraged to investigate the properties of materials that are suitable for their project, demonstrate the processes they will use and explain how these might change if the product were to be manufactured commercially.

Development of Design Proposals

Development continued to make good use of mock-ups; much more information was given on how the product was made (including patterns). Computer Aided Design (CAD) was used in development work in many centres. Sustainability was covered by only very few centres. Materials choice and properties were covered by some centres.

A considerable number of candidates provided work that was teacher led, formulaic and lacked the sense of risk-taking and testing that should be encouraged. It was noticeable that there was still a significant amount of work that can be considered to be of KS3 level rather than GCSE level, and this may in part be explained by the significant number of schools entering Year 9 candidates.

Many centres encouraged candidates to exploit the use of testing, modelling, sampling etc. and also used screen dumps of their work in 2D Design or similar to show how the manufacturing plan led their designs toward a final solution.

Making

Making was often over rewarded with regard to the quality and rigor of the outcome. When assessing making skills, centres should consider more carefully the complexity and range of skills demonstrated by the candidate in addition to the quality of the finished outcome. Many candidates were given credit for a high level of skill and accuracy for a product that was not demanding to construct.

Good projects enabled candidates to display a skilful use of materials and equipment. This enabled the production of a high quality outcome with a high level of accuracy and finish appropriate to the specification.

Testing and Evaluation

The majority of evaluations were generic and were not always checked against the Design Criteria as expected. Some centres did refer to the client/ target market, manufacturing processes and further improvements which are to be commended and encouraged.

Moderators reported seeing some excellent examples from many centres which involved candidates carrying out tests on the final product and clear feedback from the client on its effectiveness

Weaker evaluations often described the process of designing and making, rather than specifically evaluating work against the specific design criteria. Although a pro-former is useful for some students, some poor evaluations involved candidates 'answering' a set of questions prepared by the teacher with superficial, and often meaningless answers.

Communication

The best folders had excellent examples of sketching with appropriate rendering skills. Ideas were well annotated and displayed the use technical graphics such as Isometric.

Poor folders often did not utilise the use of IT effectively and displayed poor basic sketching and drawing skills. Most folders were concise and the best were clearly focused. Some used modelling as a vehicle for designing but in these cases annotation was generally not very informative.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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