



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2011**

**Expressive Arts**

**42602**

**(Specification 4260)**

**Unit 2 : Controlled Assessment: Practical work  
in response to studies of existing arts works**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **Controlled Assessment (42602)**

### ***General***

Expressive Arts has entered its second year. It is a course that encourages inspirational work across the ability range. This is the first year with all centres undertaking the new specification. Moderators were impressed by the dedicated teaching staff encountered during the moderation period. The candidates communicated ideas both creatively and expressively. An increasing number of students presented work of a very high standard, and are to be commended.

The administration of the Controlled Assessment was generally good. In the main, centres knew what they were doing; there were almost no examples of examination and moderation having to take place in inappropriate conditions; and organisation was efficient. Samples were identified and labelled, and in the signposting of where marks were awarded.

Most centres provided the correct information in advance with very few needing to be reminded.

It is important to remind centres that there are Coursework Advisors whom they can contact to check if any aspects of the candidate's work in progress may be an inappropriate route. This contact can give centres the assurance that the creative intentions of their candidates can have a positive outcome.

Centres are advised to re-read the specification and ensure candidates are able to place their work in context and have an appreciation of the cultural, historical and political context of the arts.

A number of moderators expressed concern for younger students following the course. Many were unable to achieve the depth of skill and understanding required. The maturity of a drama piece, for example, in year 10 or 11 is more likely to provide strong believable characters with a theme explored at all levels.

There were a number of misrepresented/misunderstandings of the specification initially, but those that attended standardisation meetings found the meetings useful and these helped to clarify some of the teething problems. Centres should make every effort to send a representative to standardisation meetings. This will minimise conflicting information. At the meetings, moderators were able to pass on ideas for preliminary study delivery as well as looking at the new marking assessment criteria and the requirements of the portfolio. The non-attendance of centres has led to a number of issues arising from the incorrect awarding of marks.

Work was submitted in all the available art forms, and across the board the standard of work covered the whole range of marks.

Once the students have begun work on their presentation for Controlled Assessment it cannot be teacher led. Unfortunately, there was some evidence of teacher led work this year. Students will need guidance and help with techniques during the controlled period, but this must be a distinct taught lesson, and not part of the Controlled Assessment. During the taught sessions the integration of two art forms needs to be addressed. Some schools are still not aware of the requirement. 'In both units, candidates choose two art forms and combine them to create an original practical presentation/performance, using relevant skills, techniques and compositional elements' (page 6 of the specification).

Some outstanding work combining Drama with Music, Visual Arts or Original Writing was seen, with candidates able to develop the starting point into contemporary stylistic pieces.

An obvious pattern of similar outcomes suggests centres are using a model that enforces a choice from a selection of outcomes that students then replicate. If this pattern continues, then it is reasonable to assume that schools following this model will over time promote only two art forms, in which case opportunities offered by the Expressive Arts specification are being missed.

Candidates are to be encouraged to know their intended audience. This is particularly appropriate for Drama and Original Writing. Producing a book/story for a Key Stage 2 audience requires skills of knowing the range of vocabulary for the audience as indeed a story gaged at Key Stage 3 or 4 audiences.

### ***Controlled Assessment***

Some Centres were successful in delivering Preliminary Studies (AO1) and using it as a spring board for the chosen topic, for teaching specific skills and techniques and helping to engender creative ideas for the students. Where this was not the case it proved detrimental to the work produced.

The majority of students were able to demonstrate in their portfolio (AO2 and AO4) the development of two art forms selected and the integration process which led to the final piece. Schools awarded marks for the portfolio in most cases in line with the guidelines. The moderation process for this specification provided positive support for teacher-assessors. The visiting moderator was able to give clear guidance about the awarding of marks, especially where the teacher-assessor was being overly generous.

Portfolios do not need to be bulky but they do need to show development of ideas in both art forms and how the art forms are integrated, as well as continuous evaluation (AO4) of the process. 'The evidence provided should also incorporate analytical and evaluative notes relating to the effectiveness of the work at all stages' (page 16 of the specification). The use of annotated photos in the portfolio is to be encouraged. The inclusion of rejected material (with reasons), was often enlightening.

Some candidates used prior knowledge to aid and influence their work. A number of centres are still producing an evaluation essay at the end of the portfolio, a practice to be avoided as it does not meet the requirement for the evaluation of work at all stages.

For the same reason, where centres use audio evidence it would be useful to develop a blog rather than a one-off audio. This will enable the moderator to observe progress of the task.

### ***Areas of Study and the Combination of Art Forms***

The new specification offers candidates the opportunity to study a range of different art forms. The integration of arts forms was on the whole very effective and creative. Some students need to ensure that they fully integrate their work. Students should also be guided to work to their strengths. There were some areas where students had not thought through the task and did not integrate their work fully.

The combination of art forms included Drama and Original Writing, Visual Arts and Original Writing, Moving Image and Drama, Dance and Drama and Music and Dance.

There were some very good projects both in Task 1 and Task 2, where candidates demonstrated a high level of direction and purpose. They demonstrated a secure understanding of the precise demands of the integrated art forms. Area of Study D: Contemporary Issues, produced a wide range of very interesting and effective pieces. Students tackled some very poignant areas with great sensitivity.

A number of schools were quite restrictive in the art forms offered. There was also inadequate interpretation of the expectations of some of the art forms e.g. a short written piece submitted as a monologue in the context of a wider drama piece does not provide sufficient challenge for a candidate to achieve high marks.

### **Organisation of Moderation Samples**

Centres are to be congratulated on the organisation and preparation for their moderation day. They were conducted professionally with centres having a clear structure. In the main the work was well annotated and candidates were clearly identified. A large number of excellent live performances were seen this year. Centres where students used the portfolio to modify and refine their work produced very slick and professional performances. There were some centres where this did not take place, which resulted in presentations which were too long. 'The requirements for candidates' practical presentations/performance are the same as those for the final presentation in the Examination Presentation unit' (page 16 of the specification).

Centres need to ensure that all live performances are recorded on the day of moderation. This is particularly important if at a later date there is a concern about marks awarded. In the cases where a centre requests a re-mark, recorded evidence of the moderation has to be presented.

Mostly, there was evidence of excellent record-keeping and very thorough preparation on the part of centres and their candidates. It was a pleasure to see portfolios ready, covering all examination requirements, to be presented alongside performance work. Most centres clearly identified evidence for marks awarded on working mark sheets and candidates' portfolios were neatly and well presented. It was helpful when teachers at centres explained the use of the stimulus material and its context.

When Centres are asked to provide work for awarding meetings, it is essential that the material to be viewed by the moderators or examiners is in a format that can be easily viewed on a DVD or PC. It must not require the downloading of sophisticated software.

In conclusion centres are to be thanked for the successful delivery of Expressive Arts with all the challenges of the new specification.

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

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

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