

Moderators' Report/ Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Fine Art (4FA0), Graphic Design
(4GC0), Photography (4PY0), Textiles
(4TE0).

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Introduction

In 2016, centres submitting work for the International GCSE specification were from, the following countries; Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, France, Falkland Islands, Greece, Qatar, Russian Federation, Hong Kong, Jordan, Korean Republic, Kuwait, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Oman, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri-Lanka, Switzerland, Spain, Libya, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America and United Republic of Tanzania. All entries for the examination once again showed the rich cultural diversity of the various countries making submissions.

The International GCSE specification aims to provide all centres with the framework to develop and devise courses for Art and Design across all four endorsements:

- Fine Art
- Graphic Design
- Photography
- Textiles

The specification is 100% examination, externally set and marked. Centres can enter students for more than one endorsement in any one-examination session. Fine Art continues to be the most popular endorsement chosen by centres, followed by Graphic Design, Photography and Textiles. A key feature of the specification is it allows teachers the freedom to approach the assessment objectives, in the way, which best suits them and their students.

Pearson Edexcel Website Support

The '**Centre Guidance Document**' which can be found on the Edexcel website covers:

- Key events and deadlines
- Entry information
- Endorsed titles
- Assessment summary
- Summary of scheme of assessment
- External examination and preparatory studies
- The practical examination
- Private candidates
- After the examination
- Instructions for the dispatch of work
- Special consideration
- Malpractice
- Grade awarding
- Enquiries about results

With regard to administration, not all centres submitted authentication forms with candidate's submissions.

In the 2016 series, a number of centres submitted research and final outcomes on sheets larger than A2. A small number of centres submitted more than three sheets of preparatory sheets, when in contrast; some centres only submitted two sheets of preparatory work. A number of centres did not always adhere to correct labelling of work.

Clear instructions are given in the specification and 'Centre Guidance Document' regarding the requirements of the examination.

If you have a question about the International GCSE Art and Design specification, '**Ask the Expert**' is a resource you may decide to use. Information about this resource can be found on the Pearson Edexcel website, under information for teachers.

At the end of 2014, a new set of exemplar materials for International GCSE were commissioned by Pearson and these can be seen and downloaded from the link below:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-art-and-design-2009.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Category%2FTeaching-and-learning-materials>

This is a resource for existing centres, those new to the qualification or those who are considering delivering it in their centres. The exemplar materials show examples from all endorsements and mark categories ranging from exceptional to weak, with comments by the Chief Examiner. The exemplars are from a variety of past examination papers including; Delicate, Open, Shadow/Shade, Extreme and Layers.

A programme of professional development and training, covering various aspects of the specification and examination can be found on the website for 2016-2017. Centres may also wish to contact their Regional Development Managers for further information and support regarding training requests.

Endorsements

Within the four endorsements offered, the majority of centres have a very clear understanding of the requirements laid down in the specification content. There are still a very small number of centres that enter candidates for the various endorsements who have limited understanding of the requirements of the specification in the context of the endorsements. It is vital that centres have a clear knowledge of the endorsement content being taught to candidates when planning and structuring courses for future submissions.

The Assessment Objectives

The assessment objectives should be seen as inter-related activities, not stand alone components. Unfortunately, there are some centres as noted by examiners that still approach the assessment objectives in chronological order. When structuring courses and in the preparatory six week period for the examination, this should be borne in mind. However, when centres structure their courses, they should ensure the chosen themes or genres are sufficiently flexible to allow candidates to make a personal and informed response. Many centres are now using past examination themes when planning and structuring courses. This in turn allows candidates to pursue their own individual creative journey of discovery. Within this planning, a number of centres need to place greater emphasis on working from firsthand experience.

It was disappointing to see a number of highly skilled candidates, with signs of creative potential, at the middle range of marks, because they had failed to submit evidence for a particular assessment objective. AO2 continues to be an assessment objective that some candidates fail to show any evidence for, and in doing so, centres severely disadvantage these candidates.

Assessment Overview

- Examination piece (maximum size A2), with six weeks preparatory time and 10 hours examination time
- Up to three sheets of preparatory studies (maximum size A2 sheet), carried out during the six-week preparatory period
- 100 marks are available for this assessment

Reviewing, Refining and Modifying Research for the Practical Examination

With the help of the centre, it is important that candidates review, refine and modify their submission for presentation, choosing the work which best illustrates their ability at covering all four assessment objectives.

Below are strengths and weaknesses of work, seen by examiners in the 2016 examination.

Strengths

- Use of local environment and culture enhanced many candidates submissions
- Sensitive, helpful annotations brief and to the point, useful in explaining thought processes.
- Relevant and interesting sources supported the best submissions.
- Appropriate support given to candidates during the research period
- Primary source material much in evidence.
- Exciting, diverse materials used to extend and develop individual experimentation. These experiments were used to inform progression and development of personal progression.
- Excellent development processes, informed by the work of artists.
- Proficient technical skills in a variety of media, oil pastels, coloured pencil and mixed media.
- Work which reflects an understanding of the purpose of visual research.
- Appropriate contextual links in the visual form or including short written analysis.
- Sequential development of ideas using appropriate materials.
- Taking photographs of work in progress.
- Evidence of an understanding of the formal elements.
- Good advice and guidance given by centres regarding presentation of research.
- Well organised/structured research sheets that explain candidates' intentions and progress.
- Centres where real teaching had taken place. Candidates had been worked hard, but had responded positively and produced work with confidence.
- Well-taught, sustained visual developments focused upon incremented improvement to achievement.
- High level drawing skills.
- Surreal concepts, inventive responses to the examination theme.
- Complex issues addressed with sensitivity and sophistication.

Weaknesses

- Safe and predictable outcomes.
- Candidates who repeated/copied one of their preparatory studies for the final piece.
- Poor presentation of work on research sheets.
- Final outcomes disappointing after initial research.
- Poor ability to review, modify and refine.
- Re-iterating ideas on the research sheets.
- Some centres presented research where there was too much emphasis on writing.
- Unedited 'downloads' from the Internet.
- Over-reliance on secondary images.

- Lack of artist research and/ or research unrelated to the work/ not informing the work.
- Excess of secondary images.
- Research was superficial, incomplete or disorganised.
- Copying with no purpose.
- Work which lacks refinement
- No sequential journey.
- Little visual analysis.
- Research where the intentions were not clear.
- One or more of the AO's not covered, particularly AO2.
- Little understanding of the requirements of the specification.
- Not using all space available on research sheets.
- Examination piece not always clearly identified.
- Disconnected final outcomes not linking as strongly to developmental work.
- Annotation more descriptive, rather than critical vocabulary.
- Final outcome a 'blow up' from an earlier study on research sheet.

Practical Examination and Preparatory Studies

Those candidates who performed their best were generally from centres that had provided a well-structured beginning to the examination. Good time management during the six-week research period can also help candidates in their planning. It was clear, however, that some centres had given very little support to candidates in helping them 'un-pick' the exam paper.

Centres are reminded that the candidate response to the examination should be supported by a taught six-week period, prior to the ten-hour examination. Centre's should download and print the paper as soon as it is posted on the Pearson Edexcel website (1st February), to enable them to prepare teaching and learning resources to support their candidates in the six week period.

The Six-Week Preparatory Period

The six-week preparatory period prior to the examination is a taught period where art teachers can help and advise students about their work. It is helpful if, as work progresses, students can then choose their best idea, collecting more reference material to help in their examination.

Where centres achieved very high marks, this was the result of a highly focused and dedicated approach to supporting candidates.

In some centres, there was a distinct lack of evidence for AO2, or the research was superficial. This then had an impact on the resulting achievements of the candidates. As in previous years, examiners commented that some centres failed to show evidence for AO2 resulting in these candidates losing marks. In contrast, the majority of centres had a clear understanding of the assessment objectives, producing very personal and individual work.

It was pleasing to note that many centres gave candidates the opportunity to use a wide range of materials, using a variety of processes and techniques.

Within the research presented for assessment, it was noted by examiners there was an excess of secondary images used by a number of candidates. Too much copying and repetitive work can waste vital space on the research sheets. It is important that centres balance the level of primary and secondary sources used by candidates. Examiners also noted that where candidates reiterated images on their research sheets, it prevented these candidates from developing their full potential.

First hand photography was effectively used by a number of candidates. Imaginative role-play situations were created and recorded to support final outcomes. A number of candidates also used photography when planning and setting up still life groups, and in recording the process of three-dimensional works.

An Example of a Photography Endorsement



Ten-Hour Examination

Examiners noted there were good, expansive and imaginative ideas triggered by the theme, 'Hidden'. The following subheadings of the main theme; Hidden Identity, Hidden Code, Hidden Evidence and Hidden Emotion were the most popular. The theme is a starting point and candidates may work from any of the starting points suggested by the theme. They may also choose to develop a relevant starting point of their own on the examination theme.

Examiners commented that many candidates produced individual, personal and creative responses to the theme. Candidates produced final outcomes, which were sustained and focussed. Successful contextual references included Cindy Sherman, Georgia O'Keeffe, Van Gogh, Rene Magritte, Andy Warhol, Marion Bolognesi, Shepard Fairey, Neville Brody, Aubrey Beardsley and Banksy.

Below are general comments in relation to the four assessment objectives made by examiners. They are generic and must not be seen as a list of criticism or praise for individual centres.

AO1 – Record observations, experiences and ideas which are appropriate to intentions:

- Some centres had used primary sources submissions that had greater depth and coherence.
- Many candidates used photography as a first hand source. However, a number worked exclusively from second hand imagery.
- Overuse of secondary sources.
- Centres need encouragement to use primary sources.
- Confusing paste up of too many images was not helpful.
- Low relief decorative pieces well crafted.
- Evidence in some submissions of real 'risk taking', leading to exciting final responses.

AO2 – Analyse and evaluate images, objects and artefacts, making informed connections with the work of others:

- There was a lack of rigorous contextual research seen in some submissions.
- Some candidates lacked any evidence of contextual study.
- In some submissions, it was only possible to discern the vaguest reference to artists, designers and craftspeople.
- Obscure artists not always 'valid' or useful.
- Some candidates unsure of how to analyse and evaluate.
- Sophisticated and sustained references to the work of others.
- Accomplished drawing from observation was observed in many centres.
- A number of candidates in the competent mark category could have strengthened their position in this band by greater analysis and connection to the work of others.

- Some gallery trips featured strongly in the creative journey.
- Sometimes too much writing, without enough depth.

AO3 – Develop and explore ideas, using a variety of media and processes that are appropriate to intentions:

- Reiteration sometimes seen in some submissions tended to stifle creative experimentation.
- Many centres offered their candidates the opportunity to become familiar and proficient with a wide variety of media.
- Copies rather than development of ideas and sources.
- Good selection of media, but not always used appropriately.
- Candidates who have lots of ideas and struggle to focus these in order to fully develop a final outcome.
- Where candidates had been given opportunities to use media in a structured, but individual way, submissions had greater depth.
- A lack of experimentation meant some final outcomes were less sustained.
- Some candidates had not exploited the potential of the materials they had chosen to use.
- Some whole submissions used only one technique.
- Good digital Photoshop experiments brought back into traditional hand skills outcomes.
- High level of sophistication in graphics submissions, understanding the impact in communicating an image with the target audience.
- Some exploration superficial, which hindered development.
- Some candidates consolidated ideas too early.
- Lack of development in lower mark range work when candidates were more capable, as evidenced in their final outcomes.

AO4 – Review and refine ideas, modifying work as it progresses, before presenting a coherent personal response:

- Some personal responses seen were ill advised, due to poor preparation for reviewing, refining and modifying candidates' work.
- In the best of centres, candidates projected a journey via the preparatory study sheets, culminating in skilful and mature outcomes, sometimes beyond the expected level.
- Candidates' ability to review and refine was often interpreted by some candidates as 'having a dummy run'. This often resulted in the final outcome lacking the qualities found in the research sheets. Where reflection and evaluation had vigour, final pieces had much greater depth.
- Some candidates in the fluent mark category not breaking into the exceptional category, due to disappointing final outcomes.
- Very little evidence that a true refinement of ideas or imagery carried through to the final composition, which was often fractured, or pastiche.
- Some candidates repeated ideas or consolidated them too early.
- Final outcomes in some cases came from nowhere.
- Some reviewing processes were very sophisticated, leading to accomplished final outcomes.

- Modifying and refining ideas and images was often completely lacking from the submissions of lower achieving candidates.

It was clear that the quality of teaching and learning in some centres was outstanding. These centres are to be commended for their enthusiasm, imagination and endeavour to provide candidates with the platform to give their best in the examination.

Submitting preparatory studies and ten hour examination for external assessment

If the final piece is fragile bulky or larger than A2 in size, the centre must make arrangements to photograph the work. This year, we also had some centres submitting research sheets larger than A2 in size. The format for submitting work for the examination is made clear in the specification and examination paper. Further, guidance can also be seen in the 'Centre guidance document' highlighted earlier in this report.

An example of a Fine Art Endorsement



Good teaching, well-structured courses and appropriate resourcing ensure that candidates perform to their full potential in the examination. There was much evidence of this in the May 2015 series. Disappointingly however, there were some centres submitting work that had little understanding of the requirements of the specification. This year saw some centres submitting work, which was not meeting entry level for this examination. To move forward, these centres must become much more familiar with the International GCSE specification. They may also wish to take advantage of the various Professional Development and Training opportunities being offered in 2015-16 information and these events can be found on the Edexcel website.

Centres wishing to move their candidates forward and improve their performance must address the following issues:

- Centres must develop a course structure underpinned by the assessment objectives in preparation for the examination.
- A clear understanding of the specification content for the endorsements.
- Good teaching and learning, which stems from an emphasis on recording visually from firsthand experience.
- With the help of the centre, it is important that candidates review and refine their submission for presentation, choosing the work which best illustrates their ability at covering all assessment objectives.
- Establish effective research methods for candidates.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

