



Examiners' Report Lead Examiner Feedback

June 2022

Pearson BTEC Firsts in Art & Design
Unit 2: Creative Project in Art & Design
(20478E)

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Grade Boundaries

What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, are on the website via this link: <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

Awarding BTEC qualifications in 2022

Ofqual has [set out their plans](#) for awarding qualifications in 2022 and intend to return to a normal, pre-pandemic, approach to grading standards over by 2023. They have confirmed that 2022 will be a transition year, to reflect that we are in a pandemic recovery period and students' education has been disrupted.

Our guiding principle and approach to awarding BTEC qualification results in 2022 will be to ensure parity in relation to the approach being taken for GCSE and A level learners. BTEC courses have a different structure and design to academic qualifications - BTECs are modular qualifications (with assessments taking place throughout the course)

compared to GCSEs and A levels which are linear (assessed and awarded at the same time at the end of the year), and therefore our approach needs to be different.

In 2022 we will return to the usual method of calculating BTEC qualification results, however adaptations including, U-TAGs and reduced internal assessment, are in place to provide a comprehensive package of support for students.

The basis of our awarding approach to BTECs this year is to ensure it is as fair as possible for all learners. We will use a range of evidence to set grade boundaries for the external units. Part of this evidence will be to closely monitor learner performance in all assessments that contribute to learners' final qualification grade, to ensure parity with A level and GCSEs.

Further information can be found [on our website](#) and via our Social Media channels.

Unit 2: Creative Project in Art & Design (20478E)

| Grade | Unclassified | Level 1/2 | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | L1P | P | M | D |
| Boundary Mark | 0 | 8 | 13 | 18 | 24 |

Introduction

This report is intended to give centres insights into this year's Unit 2 performance, the scope and quality of work seen, innovation and surprises in the outcomes, and to help centres develop improved practice in the assessment process.

As in previous years, it is advised that centres read, consider, and then use their moderator's reports to help develop action plans and improvement strategies. They should also read this report and consider the published Grade Boundary figures, available to them on the Pearson website.

Later in this report, quotes or comments taken from moderator's reports are included to extend centres' appreciation of the range of material being seen during the moderation process. We hope these will be also useful in reflecting the wide range of experiences and observations that the many dozens of moderators make as they complete moderation of centres.

Overall Performance of the Unit

Centre should ensure that they have read the Admin Support Guide before they start to deliver this unit – this will help them plan and prepare for assessment and moderation of the externally set task. It is vital that centres are familiar with the guidance provided for each series, aware of any changes in process and ensure they follow the administration requirements and meet the key dates and deadlines.

The majority of centres managed the moderation process effectively and followed the specified remote moderation process for this series and were able upload their remote moderation samples and meet the key deadlines. Only a few centres encountered issues when submitting the digital sample for moderation, and the files and folders were generally accessible, well organised and labelled correctly.

In some cases, learners could have looked more carefully at the detail and intention within the questions. There are also further requirements in the section at the end of each of the pathways under the headings “Your research should focus on” and “Client expectations”. These help to shape presentation and formats for submission.

Learners should be given the whole paper to read and from which to select their own choice of question. Naturally centres have specialist strengths, usually reflected in the choices made.

Some centres still operate by imposing or suggesting quite a formulaic step-by-step framework approach, which often results in a prescriptive delivery of the course and can make many of the submissions appear almost identical in structure and format. Moderators reported seeing common pages on artist research, all referring to the same few artists; exercises in artists technique such as Seurat-style dots, or Fauvist colour palettes, copied biographical material that learners are cutting and pasting without really understanding it. If there was a characteristic anomaly this year, it was the amount of formulaic or near-duplicated artist research seen in the preparatory pages of whole cohorts that ended up having little or no relevance to the final outcomes.

Stronger submissions demonstrate clearly how learners have developed their own creative ideas based on their own choices of artist and designer research, so that they can create connections between the work of selected practitioners and show how that inspires and informs their own creative ideas and progress.

Some submissions were found to have paid less close consideration the clients needs, which at times limited access to the higher mark bands. At the end of the project, some learners included a short-written presentation or a visual to show how their final piece could be shown "in situ". Attempts were made by learners to explain how outcomes would be presented to the client; this is good practice and should be encouraged. In a few centres learners had been encouraged to photograph the outcomes and digitally manipulate the images to embed within photographs or drawings of the suitable locations. These were found to be very effective.

Moderators reported that the visual arts pathway was a popular choice for learners. This may be because some centres may not have the resources to support a specialist pathway. This is perfectly acceptable, although centres may find it advantageous to the learners to encourage them to select a pathway which they feel the most confident with.

There has also been evidence of centres offering more specialist pathways, and it is now the case there are more centres opting for the fashion and textiles, product design and visual communication pathways. Some exceptional, attractive, and engaging work was seen in response to the Bauhaus theme questions, with some innovative design and production of furniture and lighting, complete with low-energy LED illumination. The Bauhaus question also elicited some stronger responses in the design of posters and banners, with some learners really capturing the visual style and language of the movement.

There were a number of strong responses to the cells and structures themes, although sometimes the development, experiment and test pieces were not

fully developed into final outcomes with quite enough confidence and flair. One example seen in the fashion and textiles pathway was presented as a strong sketchbook, and ended up as an attractive, personal piece of design, a dress with printed fabric that did show a good sense of the requirements inherent in the design process.

It was very encouraging to hear moderator feedback that learners engaged with and were inspired by the paper, and that a large proportion of them were clearly well-motivated and focused on the preparatory stages and then proved able to develop their own ideas in the controlled test; this was evident across all pathways.

Regardless of the chosen pathway or brief, some learners see the unit not as a vocationally contextualised task for a client, but as a starting point for a personal piece of art. The vocational context, brief, client requirements, and any other specific requirements should always be considered.

There is still evidence of centres directing learners towards a specific brief and/or pathway and over-managing the preparatory period through a series of exercises and near-identical studio activities, and in some cases even appearing to be prescribing what learners produce in the 20-hour controlled assessment period. Centres are advised to ensure that support is appropriate to the level in the preparatory period, making sure that learners feel they have freedom to make individual choices leading to personal outcomes.

Centres who operate in a very formulaic manner, pre-selecting the question, supplying identical artist reference material to learners and encouraging learners to complete similar tasks on a week-by-week basis, do not allow sufficient room for learners to evidence independence and personality in their work. The result is often duplication between sketchbooks and evidence of identical processes being used. This approach may disadvantage learners as it does not allow them to synthesise a diverse range of designs and ideas which imaginatively explore the requirements of the brief.

At its most effective, guided development in the early stages will serve the learner best, hopefully ensuring that research is properly undertaken. Best practice could be for a range of ideas to be developed, and for critical discussion and review to follow, so that specific ideas and directions can be discarded, and others kept, from which selections can be made for final outcomes with meaningful justification and reasoned personal argument.

There were centres who offered a less prescribed approach for learners, prepared them for the timed assessment period and made sure they were able to meet the requirements of the brief. In good examples of this, outcomes

were individual and well resolved. Learners performed well under those conditions and more effectively, and independently reached their potential. Where centres had a 'factory' approach where once the cut and paste information was removed the remaining content looked too similar, structured, and prescribed.

Too often the responses did not demonstrate the cognitive ability to proceed, analyse and experiment without task lists and writing frame sheets. Boxes were ticked but qualitative judgements were not in evidence. At times a linear approach was in evidence with little review or development beyond the obvious. Centres would benefit from emphasising the iterative and cyclic nature of the design process, the reflective thinking, the inclusion and discarding of proposals, the development and refinement of ideas. As would be expected, responses at the lower end of the marks scheme seemed to arrive at one idea early on, whereas learners in the higher mark bands were found to have successfully explored a more diverse and interesting range of ideas, most often on their own and following their own ideas and creative intentions.

The extent to which learners were able to meet the brief in many cases depended on whether there had been adequate analysis of the requirements of the brief. It is not helpful if centres do not let the learners see the whole paper, and the specific detail in each question, particularly when learners have not fully understood the requirements of the brief.

There were good examples of learners having worked through the preparatory period and then produced outcomes that related to the preparatory work and met the requirements of the brief. The local landscape question elicited some effective results, with some lively location photography and drawing seen in sketchbooks, which developed into final pieces. However, some final outcomes seemed to be a collage of sections selected from earlier pages in the sketchbooks and simply re-drawn, and those had less meaning, impact, and effect. The outcomes from learners who fully met the intentions of their chosen brief and the best examples, balanced personal interests and identified sources with the client expectations with real skill and confidence.

The assessment grids were generally applied accurately by teacher-assessors when awarding marks and there was evidence of centres identifying the 'not met', 'partially met' or 'fully met' criteria as well as the descriptors and marking the work accordingly. However, some centres did not understand the fine-tuning aspect of the assessment criteria document.

There are still some centres who struggle with consistency when marking across the different mark ranges. When leniency is found, it is usually in the higher mark bands, and around the level 2 pass threshold. Moderators have

reported that submissions that do not meet the criteria for marks bands 4 and 5 have been overmarked without enough regard for the descriptors and criteria. Some moderators found that in such examples, centres were assessing too leniently, often selecting and marking within a mark band fully one band higher than where the work really sat.

As a vocational award there needs to be a strengthening of the essential skills required. Research as an independently driven process, not one reliant on hand-outs and writing frames. Idea development properly based on context, client requirements and adherence to a specific brief.

There have been some excellent submissions towards the top end of the mark range, with examples seen in visual arts, fashion and textiles, visual communication, and product design. These have also been assessed with integrity and accuracy. Assessment has also improved in accuracy at the lower end of the scale, with centres showing an improved understanding of the level 1/level 2 pass boundary.

Summary

Based on the responses seen this series, the following should be noted:

- Review and discuss the moderator's report and use the information provided to develop and help implement their action planning.
- Use departmental resources fully to support delivery of this qualification.
- Look on the Pearson website for all the exemplar material available to support better assessment and delivery practice. This includes the examiner's report published each year.
- Avoid mechanistic and formulaic models of delivery which stifle individual creativity and are limited to step-by-step exercises in media, materials, processes, and techniques.
- Do not rely on handing-out the same artists/designer resources for every learner, instead encourage learners to choose and use personal choices of contextual references.
- Use selected questions from previous years' exam papers as 'mini-assignments' to help prepare learners.
- Underpin learning with drawing, research skills, understanding of primary and secondary source material and ensure learners see how these elements inform design and decision-making.
- Use the 20 hours of preparatory time to encourage and ensure that there is a clear focus on the development of individual work and ideas.



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