

Examiners' Report

January 2010

Principal Learning

Creative and Media Level 2 Controlled Assessments

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Level 2 Principal Learning in Creative and Media

Introduction

The January 2010 series saw a general improvement of the quality of work submitted for moderation. The need for appropriate task setting in assignments is still an issue however. Planning activities were not always robustly evidenced through appropriate documentation and some learners are not monitoring their creative work on a regular basis. Attention is drawn to the Tutor Support Materials, available at www.edexcel.com, a set of resources that includes sample assignments worksheets and planning documents.

The following administrative issues were noted during this moderation series:

- Some centres missed submission deadlines.
- Some centres had failed to include the correct paperwork e.g. Candidate Record Sheets, Authentication Statements etc.
- Some marks had been incorrectly entered on paperwork.

Centres are reminded that packaging of portfolios must be kept to a minimum. Treasury tags are preferable to ring-binders and where books only contain a small number of completed pages these pages should either be scanned or removed before being sent. Centres are reminded that 3D artefacts must not be sent for moderation. Learners should instead photograph products.

The need for careful annotation of portfolios must also be considered by centres. Each piece of evidence must be clearly mapped to the learning outcome it addresses. Tutors must also provide a justification for the marks awarded for each learning outcome. Some centres made good use of post-it notes to indicate where Learning Objectives were met and provide a tutor's commentary.

Unit 1: Scene

This unit requires learners to undertake research into a range of creative and media activities and job roles available in their own region. Learners must evidence their research methods as well as summarising their findings.

Learners are also required to produce a personal critical response to a chosen creative and/or media performance, activity or artefact. The critical response must be submitted along with research notes into the performance, activity or event. The unit culminates in the production of a guide to creative and media activity in their chosen region. Centres are free to choose the format of the guide e.g. magazine, website, documentary etc.

The research areas of this unit (LO1 & LO2) were approached through a range of activities with learners undertaking visits to venues and other organisations and interacting with a range of practitioners. Many learners had evidenced their research activities in an appropriate manner by including a research log and notes on what was discovered. For LO1 it was however noted that a number of learners investigated work that was not in their region and some investigated geographically distant places. There was also some ambiguity about 'creative and media' activities with sports and leisure facilities sometimes referenced. For LO2 most learners were able to investigate and report on different career opportunities in the C&M industry, however "showing a substantial knowledge of qualifications needed" was rarely evident to fulfil mark band 3.

In LO3 learners discussed a range of creative & media events/activities with theatre productions and films again being popular. Most learners submitted a written response and the best examples demonstrated an engagement with the material being discussed. Many learners however presented reviews with little personal response. Evidence of research/investigation into the chosen activity/event was not evident in some portfolios. Centres are reminded that this is a requirement of LO3 and marks will be limited if evidence of an investigation is not submitted to support the critical response.

For LO4 many learners produced useful guides to the range of creative and media activity in the chosen region in a range of different formats. In some cases however guides were limited to just one specific aspect of the C&M industry, e.g. theatres. Many portfolios lacked the required planning documentation and evidence of an awareness of a target audience.

Where learners had created a guide as part of a collaborative project it was sometimes difficult to ascertain their individual contribution and their ability to create a comprehensive guide. Learners who had produced an individual guide therefore tended to achieve higher marks for this outcome.

Unit 2: Performance

This unit requires learners to investigate the development of a form of performance and contribute to the planning and production of a performing arts event. Work submitted for the January 2010 series showed a marked improvement on the work submitted for the previous series. It is a concern however that many centres had not provided evidence of individual learner contribution to the planning and production activities that are central to this unit.

LO 1. There was a range of research work produced for this outcome including examples of detailed investigations into the development of forms of performance such as musicals, devised drama and horror films. Better examples described factors that had influenced the development of the form over a period of time.

Many investigations identified a performance genre and a time period but used limited research skills to carry out individual investigations. In some cases research sources were not identified and some portfolios contained un-annotated downloads.

LO2 & 3 requires learners to contribute to the planning and production of a performance. In the most successful portfolios planning documentation was clearly linked to the rehearsal/preparation process and the realisation of the actual performance. Some portfolios however presented a limited range of documentation and in some it was difficult to differentiate learner work from teacher-generated handouts. Whilst some learners had clearly identified their production or performance role many had not.

In many cases it was difficult to identify the individual learner contribution to the actual performance. Tutor observations were used by some centres as the sole form of evidence for LO3. Centres are reminded that for those learners undertaking a performance role a recording of the performance must be submitted. Where recordings were provided learners were sometimes difficult to identify. Some strong work was however seen for LO3 including a devised performance, which combined music, drama and dance and a horror film.

Evidence provided for LO4 tended to be very limited with few learners providing evidence of on-going monitoring and reflection throughout the planning and production process. Few learners identified strengths and weaknesses and there was little evidence of how learners had used their monitoring to refine the final product.

For future series, attention is drawn to the need for:

- planning and production documentation to be used appropriately to provide transparent evidence of how each learner completes their individual responsibilities
- the inclusion of a recording of the final performance with each learner clearly identified.

Unit 3: Artefact

This unit requires learners to undertake research into the processes of creating artefacts looking at external factors that influence their production. Learners are then required to plan and create an artefact. They must also monitor the creative process as they work reflecting on strengths and weaknesses and making adjustments to plans as necessary.

Learners had created a wide range of artefacts including masks, hats, props for theatrical productions and, in one case, body adornment. It was again evident that the most successful learners had undertaken a well-focussed assignment, which led to the creation of a single physical product.

Many learners had undertaken detailed investigations that enabled them to demonstrate their understanding of the process of making artefacts, A number of centres had however misunderstood the requirements of LO1 concentrating on the design features of artefacts and/or the work of specific practitioners rather than an investigation into how and why specific artefacts are made.

In LO2 learners showed their initial ideas for the creation of an artefact and in the best portfolios developed these ideas in an imaginative way. In several cases however planning documents and the scheduling the production process were not apparent. Centres are reminded that a production plan must be presented for this learning outcome. Ideally documents such as risk assessments, budgets and contingency plans should also be submitted.

For LO3 the most successful learners evidenced the production of their artefact through annotated photos and/or a production log. In other portfolios however evidence of the skills and techniques used to create the artefact tended to be implicitly evidenced through a photograph of the final product. The ability to gather resources also tended to be evidenced implicitly however in some cases learners had included lists of required resources and materials describing how they would be used and why they are necessary.

The requirement to monitor the creative process (LO4) was the weakest element of the unit for many learners. The most successful portfolios included annotations in sketchbooks and/or regular diary entries in which learners discussed their progress, identified strengths and weaknesses and described decisions made. In some portfolios however only a brief end of unit evaluation was presented.

Unit 4: Record

This unit is about making a record of something. The learner must choose whether to work on their own to make a personal record of a particular place, event or situation or to work as part of a group. Whether they work individually or collaboratively, in order to meet all of the learning outcomes for this unit, learners must provide evidence of their involvement with each stage of the recording process.

Within this moderation series, learners were predominantly working with audio/visual media to produce video records, these included records of fashion shows and field trips. Other effective portfolios focused on the process of recording something through the medium of photography. This unit does enable learners to combine a wide range of disciplines and centres are reminded that the visual arts, publishing, audio and radio, animation, music and interactive media could all be used to create an appropriate record.

There were several examples of cohesive process portfolios, where learners conducted a relevant investigation into how the chosen medium can be used to create a record, prior to planning, monitoring and completing the creation of a record in the same medium.

LO1 requires learners to investigate recording processes in their chosen medium, including an explanation of recent developments. Better responses analysed a wide range of examples, focusing on a comparison of how they were produced. The majority of responses, however, did not focus on how the medium has been used over time to produce a variety of records and did not discuss how or why both obvious and less obvious recent developments occurred. Learners should be encouraged to produce research logs and research notes as part of their investigation before presenting the results of that investigation in an appropriate form. Although this is predominantly through a written report or PowerPoint presentation, audio and video recordings are also suitable.

As with the previous moderation series, there were few examples of process portfolios that evidenced the whole process of planning the creation of a record. Appropriate forms of evidence include notes on ideas, research outcomes, production plans, records of meetings, resource lists and initial design work.

There was a general improvement in the quality of the final records. It must be noted that learners are expected to be given the time and resources necessary to develop their understanding of the range of skills and techniques required to create an effective final product in the chosen medium.

Learner attainment would be supported by the more widespread adoption of a monitoring and review process, whereby learners regularly monitor their own progress and use the findings to inform, shape or modify their work. Not only would this provide evidence of attainment in relation to LO4, it would also improve the overall quality of the learner's final record.

Unit 5: Campaign

Within the Campaign Unit, learners must develop an understanding of the nature and purpose of different campaigns before preparing and conducting their own campaign, monitoring the process throughout.

Assignment briefs ranged from advertising campaigns for particular products to more distinctive and localised campaigns that aimed to raise awareness of specific ideas or issues. Although the term 'campaign' encompasses both approaches, local campaigns where the learner became significantly involved in the shaping of the message or idea being promoted and the methods used to deliver that message tended to produce the most cohesive and effective campaigns.

In response to LO1, the majority of learners simply described the main message and target audience for a series of adverts. Although better responses compared the relative success of the campaigns they investigated, few learners explored how campaign strategies involve careful planning to convey their message to their target audiences through a variety of different methods.

There was evidence of higher attainment in relation to LO2 than within the previous moderation series. Although still in the minority, process portfolios were submitted that contained evidence of an identifiable campaign strategy that planned how a particular message would be communicated to a specific target audience or audiences. Furthermore, a broader range of campaign materials were produced to a good standard, with evidence of relevant skill in the production of - among other materials - T-shirts, badges, posters and websites.

The campaign materials themselves are, however, only one element of the evidence required in relation to LO2. Learners did not generally produce evidence that they had considered who their audience will be, how that audience will be persuaded to take notice of the campaign and its message, how the campaign will be distributed or broadcast, what materials and resources will be required to conduct the campaign and how the success of the campaign will be measured.

Some learners were still producing end of unit evaluations, whereas LO4 requires learners to provide evidence of the regular monitoring and review of their campaign, where learners identify the strengths and weaknesses of their campaign in order to refine their ideas and outcomes. This process should also be informed by the results of audience feedback.

Unit 6 Festival

For this unit learners must produce a portfolio that evidences research into Festivals giving descriptions of these and information on their artistic policies; programme content; funding; and target audiences. Portfolios must also include evidence of individual planning documentation from idea conception to the actual delivery of the festival and all learners must contribute to both the planning and production of publicity materials. Mark B covers their contribution during the Festival and is evidenced through tutor observations.

The work seen for the Festival unit this series has shown a marked improvement in quality in comparison to June 2009.

LO1 Researching Festivals

The evidence produced ranged from extremely brief descriptions of two or three festivals with limited evidence of understanding of the four listed areas to well-detailed and well-focused investigations. On the whole however, only superficial evidence was found to demonstrate learners' understanding of funding and artistic policies. Learners who investigated multi-purpose venues rather than actual festivals struggled to achieve higher marks for this outcome. Formats given to learners to help them address all four areas were generally successful.

LO2 Planning a Festival

It was clear, for the most part, that learners had engaged in the planning of their festival but the supporting planning documentation was often brief. Some centres submitted teacher witness statements instead of physical evidence of individual learner planning. Whilst this is a useful addition to learner generated evidence the sole use of witness statements is to be discouraged. Where centres used professional facilitators in the planning and delivery of their festivals, learners' ability to fully engage in planning and organising their festival tended to be limited.

LO3 Planning the promotion of a Festival

Evidence for this learning outcome was often rather limited. Centres are reminded that **all learners** must contribute to both the planning of the promotion of the festival and the production of publicity materials. Where learners had been split into committees to undertake the planning process and only a small proportion of learners were given the opportunity to evidence any promotional activity the marks of those learners not on the promotional team were limited.

For this unit there was generally a lack of teacher annotation on the learner work. At best this included witness statements and signposting of learning outcomes but several portfolios had no discernible annotation. It would also be helpful to moderation and learners if a statement were produced as part of the publicity documentation which would detail the content and aims of the festival undertaken.

For future series, attention is drawn to the need for:

- more individual evidence of engagement in planning activities.
- each learner to contribute to the planning and production of promotional materials
- professional facilitators to be used carefully so as not to limit the marks available to the learners.

Unit 7: Project Report

The unit requires learners to gather feedback from a range of sources to work produced in unit 2, 3 or 4. They are required to analyse responses to assess the success of the work.

Section A of the report requires learners to:

- describe the methods used to gather responses, information and data relating the work.
- describe the sources from which responses were gathered
- summarise the responses,
- draw conclusions.

Section B of the report requires learners to use the results of their research to help them evaluate the project in relation to:

- the development of ideas
- planning activities
- use of materials and techniques
- achievement of aims
- interaction with others (if appropriate)
- how the work was presented.

There are also marks available for the presentation of the report.

Learners must complete the final report under controlled conditions in no more than 3 hours. Illustrative materials can be produced outside the 3 hours and must be presented separately. Centres are reminded that images, graphs and other illustrative materials must be presented as additional files. They must not be embedded into the actual report.

Many learners produced well-structured reports that made good use of headings and subheadings. The Performance unit CM202 was the most popular choice of unit for the report with audience questionnaires, focus group meetings and one-to-one interviews with 'experts' being amongst the methods used to gather responses to work. Some learners were able to summarise information gathered and draw detailed conclusions about their work. Successful learners had also carefully selected illustrative materials that had clear relevance to what was being discussed. Some learners had not however used a range of sources in section A, in some cases a single questionnaire was used. In some reports data was summarised but no conclusions were offered. A small number of learners had misunderstood the requirements of section A describing the research undertaken whilst planning their project rather than discussing audience responses to their work.

Some section B responses tended toward the descriptive and away from analysis of strengths, weaknesses and, crucially, how the work could have been improved. In the best examples however learners were able to discuss strengths and weaknesses justifying their conclusions by referring directly to the data gathered and analysed for section A of the report.

Statistics

Level 2 Unit 1 Scene

	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Raw boundary mark	60	52	42	33	24
Points Score	10	8	6	4	2

Level 2 Unit 2 Performance

	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Raw boundary mark	60	53	43	34	25
Points Score	10	8	6	4	2

Level 2 Unit 3 Artefact

	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Raw boundary mark	60	54	44	34	25
Points Score	10	8	6	4	2

Level 2 Unit 4 Record

	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Raw boundary mark	60	54	44	35	26
Points Score	10	8	6	4	2

Level 2 Unit 5 Campaign

	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Raw boundary mark	60	52	43	34	26
Points Score	10	8	6	4	2

Level 2 Unit 6 Festival

	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Raw boundary mark	60	52	43	34	25
Points Score	10	8	6	4	2

Level 2 Unit 7 Project Report

	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Raw boundary mark	60	54	44	34	24
Points Score	10	8	6	4	2

Notes

Maximum Mark (raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme or mark grids.

Raw boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a learner to qualify for a given grade.

Please note: *Principal Learning qualifications are new qualifications, and grade boundaries for Controlled Assessment units should not be considered as stable. These grade boundaries may differ from series to series.*

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