

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

Edexcel Level 2
Principal Learning in Creative and
Media

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General Introduction

As in previous years the June 2013 moderation series was undertaken at a residential event by a team of moderators with a range of creative and media specialisms.

Moderators were supported and monitored throughout by the senior team.

It was disappointing that the quality of work submitted for moderation was generally than that seen in previous summer series'. Some interesting creative outcomes were however produced.

Administrative issues

The following administrative issues were noted during this moderation series:

- some centres had failed to include the correct paperwork e.g. candidate record sheets, authentication statements and Mark B assessment records.
- some marks had been incorrectly entered on paperwork

Centres are again reminded that packaging of portfolios must be kept to a minimum.

Treasury tags are preferable to ring-binders (which tend to break when transported) when joining documents together. Where sketchbooks only contain a small number of completed pages these pages should either be scanned or removed before being sent.

It was pleasing to see that the many portfolios were clearly annotated against learning outcomes. The most well presented examples also included a brief assessor comment for each learning outcome to justify the marks awarded.

CM201 - 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 include evidence of their research activities as well as summarising their findings. Learners are also required to produce a personal critical response to a chosen event, activity or artefact. The personal response must be submitted along with research notes into the event, activity or artefact. 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 but it is vital that it is designed with a specific target audience in mind and that the planning and process of creation is evidenced.

LO1 & 2

Some learners had evidenced their research in an appropriate manner by including a research log and rough notes in their portfolio as well as a summary of what was discovered. Most learners were also able to investigate and report on different career opportunities in the C&M industry, however it remains an issue that some are not focusing on jobs available in their chosen region. Centres are reminded that where primary research e.g. interviews with local practitioners cannot be undertaken it is perfectly acceptable for learners to link details job roles found through secondary research to possible opportunities in the chosen region.

It was again noted that where learners had engaged in individual research activities as well as those arranged by the teacher through visits and other activities they were more likely to include the 'less predictable' examples required by the higher mark bands.

LO3

A range of personal responses were submitted for this outcome. Whilst many learners submitted appropriate work those presenting reviews in a journalistic style often struggled to attain higher marks for a 'personal' response. Evidence of research/investigation into the chosen activity/event was not present in many portfolios thus limiting the marks available.

Some learners appeared to spend a considerable amount of time studying existing reviews. Whilst this may prepare them for writing their own response centres are once again reminded that these types of activities do not carry any marks and should not be included in portfolios.

LO4

Many learners produced useful guides that covered a range of creative and media activity in the chosen region. Many portfolios however lacked planning documentation and evidence of working to deadlines thus limiting the marks available to learners. The best guides showed a clear awareness of a very specific target audience in the planning documents as well as the actual events and activities selected for the guide.

CM202 - 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. Learner work submitted for the June 2012 series showed a continuing improvement in terms of the quality of the work submitted across the learning outcomes. The majority of assessors had used the marking grid accurately and consistently.

LO 1 A range of research work was produced including some examples of competent investigations. Most learners researched appropriate performance related material and some included discussion of factors that had influenced change. Weaker portfolios contained un-annotated downloads and lacked a specific focus or an investigation into factors that have influenced change.

LO2 Evidence of planning was often limited. While some centres had presented portfolios that evidenced and monitored the planning process most portfolios presented a limited range of documentation. In some portfolios it was difficult to differentiate learner work from teacher generated notes. Some learners had clearly identified their production or performance role however these were in the minority. Planning documentation was well evidenced in a small minority of portfolios but was missing from the majority of learner's portfolios. In a few portfolios the planning documentation was clearly linked to the rehearsal process.

LO3 The production process was insufficiently evidenced in some portfolios and it was sometimes difficult to identify the individual learner's contribution. In the stronger portfolios centres had gone to great lengths to identify each individual learner contribution.

LO4 In many portfolios reflection remains descriptive and summative however some learners were able to produce an on-going commentary on their work. Few learners were able to identify strengths and weaknesses and there was limited evidence of how learners had used the monitoring process to refine ideas and outcomes.

CM203– 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.

In this series learners had created a range of artefacts including mask, toys, props and photographs. The most successful learners had undertaken a well-focussed project that led to the creation of a single physical product.

LO1 On the whole this learning objective was carried out reasonably successfully. Learners had looked at materials and processes used although they did not always relate to the actual Artefact. The possible impact on developing technologies was not always evident and the least successful part of this learning objective was 'the purposes of their creator'. Many learners either did not tackle this aspect of the learning objective, or had very little evidence of it in their folders. The best portfolios included investigations that linked directly to the work undertaken in the remaining outcomes.

LO2 This learning objective was very inconsistent. It was clear in many cases that planning had taken place as a finished Artefact was evident but not much planning documentation was in the learners folders. Budgeting was not evident in many learners folders where it was present it was minimal.

LO3 Learners had obviously enjoyed this learning outcome however evidence of the final outcome was sometimes sparse. Only a few centres had photographed each stages of production, where this had been done it was very easy to see the range of techniques used to produce the artefact.

LO4 This was again the least successful outcome. Many learners had produced an evaluation at the end of the unit rather than ongoing monitoring records.

CM204 - Record

For this unit, learners are required to make a record of something, such as a performance, event or process. As in previous moderation series, the most popular recording mediums were video and photography, although other mediums such as art, audio and interactive media were also used to create effective records.

The most appropriate projects provided a framework for learners to investigate, plan and complete a record in their chosen medium e.g. learners who researched documentary photography before producing a portfolio of original images to record a place or event. The best group projects encouraged interaction between group members and contained meaningful roles for each member of the group, enabling each learner to generate their own ideas and planning documentation and to make a significant contribution to the creation of the record.

LO1

It is essential that learners understand how their chosen medium can be used to create a record and this learning outcome provides learners with the opportunity to undertake an investigation into the recording process. Learners should be encouraged to base their investigation around a wide range of example recordings in the chosen medium, including recordings from different periods in time. Moreover, those learners who explained how both obvious and less obvious recent developments in their chosen medium have affected the recording process were in a better position to both utilise some of those developments in their own work and meet the mark band 3 assessment criteria.

As in previous moderation series, learners who did not select a specific medium for the investigation or who created a record in a different medium to the one studied in the investigation, did not have the opportunity to put into practice the knowledge and understanding generated through LO.1.

LO2

Once again, the majority of process portfolios lacked sufficient evidence of the generation and exploration of ideas. Learners should be encouraged to generate a number of ideas for the creation of their record and then develop those ideas through thoughtful research and exploration, considering the strengths and weaknesses of each idea. Furthermore, learners need to develop effective strategies in order to plan their projects effectively and produce the necessary planning documentation, such as production plans, rough work and production paperwork relevant to their chosen recording medium.

LO3

There were some highly creative records produced within this moderation series and it was notable that within the completion of some of the more accomplished records, time had been devoted to experimenting with different recording techniques in order to enable learners to develop the necessary confidence and skills to complete their record to an appropriate standard.

Learners are also required to display efficiency in production management and maintaining records such as resource lists, production and post-production paperwork and communication between members of the production team, not only enabled learners to meet the assessment criteria for this learning outcome, it also improved the quality of the final record.

LO4

Centres are advised that learners need considerable support in order to engage meaningfully with the review process. Blogs, production diaries, learners' logs and detailed annotations of development work were all appropriate methods of monitoring progress. However, only a minority of learners were able to show that they had actively used these reflections to inform, shape or modify the planning and production of their record. This is a process that involves not only the consistent and purposeful acknowledgement of strengths and weaknesses but also the ability to act positively upon the results.

CM205 - Campaign

Within this moderation series it was encouraging to see learners working collaboratively to plan, prepare and conduct their own small-scale campaign.

The most popular campaigns aimed to raise awareness of specific ideas or issues, such as domestic abuse and online safety. Undoubtedly, campaigns on a small-scale, with a local focus, where each learner became significantly involved in shaping the message or idea being communicated and the methods used to deliver that message to a specified audience, were once again the most effective campaigns seen within this moderation series.

LO1

It was encouraging, once again, to see learners interpret the term 'campaign' broadly, researching a variety of campaigns from, among others, special interest groups, charities, government agencies, local organisations and commercial companies. Better responses provided confident and detailed descriptions of the message, target audience, strategies and relative success of different campaigns, not individual adverts. However, assessors should note that learners must assess what is distinctive about each campaign by comparing them with one another, in order to meet the mark band 3 assessment criteria.

LO2

Learners produced a wide variety of imaginative campaign materials including not only print, audio-visual and interactive materials but also a range of merchandising and campaign stunts and events. However, as in previous moderation series, process portfolios generally lacked sufficient evidence of the shaping and development of the campaign through activities such as the generation and exploration of different ideas, the creation of a production plan to provide a clear awareness of time constraints, the production of substantial and well detailed planning documentation, developmental rough work such as sketches, drafts and mood boards and individual notes on group meetings.

LO4

As in previous moderation series, only a minority of learners were able to engage meaningfully with the review process. Although a wide range of methods were used to provide evidence of appropriate monitoring activity, including learners' logs, blogs, diaries and detailed annotations throughout sketchbooks and portfolios, learners must use these reflections to assess strengths and weaknesses throughout the whole preparation and conduct of the campaign, in order to consistently and purposefully refine ideas and outcomes.

CM206 - Festival

This series continued to see a range of interpretations to the Festival unit with many generous awarded centre marks. As has been the case in historical series', several centres chose to allow their learners to concentrate on one role, either organising or promotion, to the detriment of either LO2 or LO3 respectively. There were some interesting ambitious concepts as always, some of which were owned by the students and made use of local facilities, attracting wide audiences. This is also where the learners appeared to gain the most in terms of transferable skills and enjoying their learning.

LO1 Much of the research submitted showed a lack of deeper engagement with the material. Interestingly, there was often an increased focus upon the bullet-pointed aspects of this assessment criterion, which was good to see though the lack of deeper understanding meant that learners were often limited to the lower marks. The comparisons necessary for MB3 were often attempted but were not always supported by detail so 'best fit' application of the criteria were more apparent than in previous series.

LO2 Planning notes and records demonstrated a range of engagement by the learners in the conception, development and preparation for the festival. Learner evidence was rarely detailed or personally annotated. There is an increased need for the outlining of individual learner roles and responsibilities to allow all learners achieve. Where this was provided, moderation and achievement was much more successful. Many learners' portfolios still focus upon the development of practical work rather than organisational aspects and some, whose roles were within promotion, received little credit here.

LO3 The majority of learners' contribution and involvement in planning the overall approach to promotion and delivery of this continued to be limited in evidence which restricted marks to the lower half of the mark scale. Some of those who had not been allocated a promotional role received minimal marks for this LO. This LO continues to be most successful where whole group meetings have taken place initially; everyone contributed ideas and designs for promotional materials for consideration to a finished standard; and then the best ideas were taken forward and developed by appropriate learners.

CM207 - Project Report

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

Reports based on units 202, 203 and 204 were all seen with audience questionnaires, focus group meetings and one-to-one interviews with 'experts' being the most popular methods used to gather responses to work.

Administrative issues

Centres are reminded that the writing of the report whilst controlled in terms of time allowed is not an examination. Learners must be given access to their plans, notes and the data collected when completing the report. Furthermore learners must complete the report electronically using the response booklet provided. The reports must then be transferred to a single CD for submission to the moderator.

The following administrative issues/problems were noted during this moderation series:

- some centres used a single CD for each learner
- some learners did not use the response booklet
- some learners did not include the required details (name, candidate number etc) in the header of the response booklet.

Section A

Most learners generally understood the importance of data collection, and endeavored to seek out responses from multiple sources. Those who achieved the highest marks, gave detailed accounts of their research methods, and ensured that they asked relevant questions of reliable people. Learners at the lower end of the mark range simply described methods used and presented data without drawing any conclusions from the information gathered. Some learners had simply gathered responses a single unspecified source. This limited the marks available.

A small number of centres/learners appeared to have misunderstood the requirements of section A describing the research undertaken when completing the unit e.g. research undertaken when planning a photographic record.

Section B

Many learners used headings based on the bullet points in section B thus ensuring that they discussed each required area clearly and concisely. Some learners addressed strengths and weaknesses in their work with the more able reflecting back on their findings from section A to support their arguments. Those at the higher end of the mark range also provided a well-detailed discussion of the ways in which their work could have been improved.

The use of responses gathered in section A to justify conclusions was however often limited or not included and where this was the case marks were limited.

Responses at the lower end of the mark range included only a narrative account of the project undertaken.

Presentation of reports

Many learners produced well-structured reports that made good use of headings, subheadings and bullet points. Generally the standard of written English was good. Many learners made use of relevant images including pie charts, screen grabs and photos integrating them into the report to support the conclusions drawn.

Grade Boundaries

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

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

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