

Examiners' Report January 2009

Principal Learning

Creative and Media

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Principal Learning Creative and Media

Level 1 Unit 1 Introduction to Creative and Media Skills

The work presented for moderation showed a good range of activities that enabled learners to generate evidence to meet the requirements of the unit. Centres addressed each of the creative and media skills of visual arts, performance arts and media production, but evidence was not always clearly presented. In this first moderation series of the qualification, centres are to be commended on well planned, supported and monitored programmes. However, there are important considerations to be made in the presentation of evidence and the centres need to ensure that evidence is clearly catalogued and referenced.

Evidence of good practice

Assessment evidence included useful task check lists and progress logs for learners. However, in some samples these had not been fully utilised and some showed no interaction by the learner, a fact that must clearly be reflected in the marks awarded.

Visits organised by centres to creative and media industries offered the opportunity to identify contexts in which creativity takes place and meet professionals. This supported learning and helped to develop an understanding of the skills and requirements of various career roles and paths. Good use and planning of external visits had enhanced the learning experience.

Learning Outcome 3 was the most comprehensively evidenced. The research and presentation of information about careers in the creative and media industries was excellent and identified the qualities and skills required by various job roles. In many cases individuals who participated in the group activities were not clearly identified and therefore their evidence was invalid.

PowerPoint presentations produced by learners were very thoroughly researched and well presented.

In many of the dance and drama performance evidence, video footage recorded participation in live events. Learners were usually identified by an introduction of themselves prior to their performance. However, it was not always possible to hear the name and clearer identification would help to track them throughout footage of a live event.

Progress was recorded in lesson by lesson logs, performance and observation records and were well documented, offering useful feedback to learners. These documents also proved useful at moderation in identifying the evidence considered when the assessing team made their decisions. The inclusion of completed assessment grids was also welcomed especially when they gave justifications for the assessment decisions made.

Areas of concern

Assessment was generally lenient and this leniency showed particularly when learners were moved into Mark Band 3. Marks at the top of the band were often given, when evidence only warranted the lowest available mark. When these judgements were repeated over all of the Learning Outcomes it resulted in some serious over-marking.

Portfolios were overcomplicated and needed to be simply organised into the three creative and media discipline areas as defined for Level 1 with an extra section for learning and thinking skills. Each activity should be designed to result in an outcome for each individual, which is clearly identified and documented.

The folders contained a wealth of paperwork, but much of this did not contribute any tangible evidence that could be matched to the learning outcomes. Although the forms supplied by the teacher were designed to generate and record activities, there was often no evidence of interaction by the learner. Where there is no record of learner interaction, there is no evidence offered and coverage should not be credited.

Unless documentation offers hard evidence in relation to the assessment focus it should not be included in the portfolio. Individual Learning Plans, printouts from Internet, handouts or booklets do not constitute evidence and could have been presented for moderation as an appendix of material, common to all portfolios

Learning Outcome 1 was where the most frequent over-marking occurred. Although evidence of practical workshops and presentations were included individuals were difficult to identify and information hard to find.

Individual learners need to clearly identify their role when participating in group activities. CD/DVD evidence of activities provided a good indication of group participation, but it was impossible to identify individuals and track their achievements across the numerous discs. The discs need to be chaptered and referenced to each individual, so that evidence can be directly linked to their coverage of a particular assessment focus. In both media and performance learners had not identified evidence of 'what I contributed to the production process, planning and assessment'.

Health and Safety considerations appropriate to the various sectors need to be evidenced and learners must show an awareness of how to work safely with various materials and technologies and where these considerations are applied in various job sectors. Evidence of good practice was found, but this needs to be more clearly documented.

The unit requires learners to produce a research plan for Learning Outcome 2 and in Mark band 3 it specifically states that a completed research plan must be evidenced. Although planning had been addressed and evidence found throughout learner work, a more co-ordinated record of research with a summary of the results needs to be presented. Research planning tended to be retrospectively recorded and monitored 'in response to' rather than setting out planned activities.

Centres are required to ensure that the Edexcel official Candidate Record and Authentication Statement Sheet are signed. Although these documents were found in most portfolios, there were occasions when the signature was missing and centres are reminded that the absence of this signature can result in a score of 0 being registered. These documents can be found in the Centre Guidance Document, published September 2008 and available on the Edexcel website, www.edexcel.com.

Areas for consideration

Although there was a wealth of appropriate evidence provided on CD and DVD it was difficult to unpick the content that related to individual contributions. It would be useful to the Moderation process if centres could produce presentations on individual CD/DVDs to accompany each learner's folder of work. When CD/DVDs were presented without timed and logged references, searching to find specific evidence proved to be overtly time consuming. Photographs included in the portfolios also need to be annotated to show their content and a purpose for their inclusion.

A commentary by the assessor, that includes evidence and justification for the assessment decisions, needs to be made for Marking Grid A. This document should be substantial and comprehensive to ensure both visibility and transparency over the assessment decisions recorded. This document would then support the internal and external moderation process.

The centres are advised to include sufficient individual evidence to justify the awarding of marks. This must include a documented record of individual contributions to group work, which on some occasions was not easy to find. Examples might include learner references to where they contributed to the work in the DVD. In order to personalise some of the content - the centre could provide a commentary over the DVD - or for the learners to do a separate commentary on one of the sound channels of the DVD. As a way of capturing evidence, as it occurs, perhaps consideration could be given to familiar alternative technologies already available to learners.

The recording of evidence could in many cases be extended to utilise methodology appropriate to the Creative and Media qualification, such as video diaries, blogs, tapes of group conversations and witness statements in the form of annotated photographs of events and meetings. Evaluations could be digitally recorded (sound or vision) to extend and enhance evidence.

Principal Learning Creative and Media Level 2 Unit 3 Artefact

This unit requires learners to demonstrate understanding of the nature of artefacts looking at how and why specific examples are created before planning and creating an example of their own and reviewing their work. This is the first moderation series of the qualification and only a small number of learner portfolios were presented for moderation.

There was some confusion regarding the interpretation of the term 'artefact'. Whilst a media based project eg the creation of a short film, is not inappropriate for this unit centres should remember that a CD or DVD would usually be considered an artefact if created in such a way as to make it an attractive or interesting object in its own right. If learners create a short film for release on DVD their work would therefore need to include consideration of how the physical product, ie the artefact, would be packaged to make it attractive to potential buyers. Research activities would need to reflect this with existing examples being considered by learners. The work presented did not provide evidence that learners had understood the ways in which a DVD could be considered an artefact. Centres might therefore be better served if more straightforward examples of artefacts are chosen.

LO1 requires learners to undertake research into how and why artefacts are created. Many learners had offered a description of ideas for the creation of their own artefact for this outcome. Whilst it is advisable to link research work to the skills and techniques that will be used in the unit LO1 must involve a discussion of specific examples of existing work. Learners should therefore be commenting on the processes and materials used, the impact of developing technologies and the way in which specific artefacts look and operate. Centres must also ensure that learners present the results of their investigations in a clear manner eg through a written summary or recorded oral presentation.

LO2 was addressed slightly more successfully with a range of documents being presented in evidence of developmental work and planning activities. Some learners however provided only limited evidence of planning with time constraints and health & safety being the least robustly covered. Documents such as production schedules and simple risk assessments should be used to evidence this requirement.

Many learners had produced work collaboratively for LO3. Whilst this is perfectly acceptable centres must ensure the involvement of individual learners can be clearly identified. Learners working in a group should ideally take on a specific role within the production process. Work presented for moderation should be annotated to evidence specific contributions. Logbook entries providing details of tasks undertaken are also a useful method of attributing the input of individuals.

LO4 tended to be the weakest element of this unit. Many learners failed to demonstrate the monitoring and review of their work. Centres must provide regular opportunities for learners to examine their successes and consider areas for improvement. The use of the monitoring process to refine ideas and make alterations to plans must also be clearly documented.

The marks centre assessors had awarded for Mark B were not always accompanied by the required Mark B Assessment Record (to be found in the appendices of the specification). It is vital that this document is provided as evidence of the learner's ability to follow safe working practices and produce work within time constraints as well as providing information regarding the amount of support and guidance the learner required to complete the assessment tasks. The Mark B Assessment Record should provide a record of a series of specific activities that have been observed by assessors. A final explanation of the mark awarded must also be included.

Principal Learning Creative and Media Level 3 Unit 1 Capture

The January 2009 moderation series was undertaken using a small sample of work. The only unit available for moderation in this series was Unit 1 Capture.

The work review in the moderation exercise consisted of a range of learner work across four of the five Learning Outcomes. The remaining Learning Outcome was yet to be completed by the learners. Therefore the moderation was based on an interim assessment of the learners' progress to date.

It was clear that the learners had undertaken a series of well-planned experiential activities that would ultimately lead them to the development of a capture product. The learners had produced:

- Short slide shows based on emotive words. These slide shows required the learners to find relevant images from their chosen emotive word. They had to plan and produce their show using transition techniques and a self-written and produced music track.
- Photographic work undertaken for a local photographic project and stored using www.flickr.co.uk
- An exploration of Photojournalism. This allowed the learners to explore a chosen photojournalist and produce a short video programme about them. Generally this was development of the emotive video slide show. Learners demonstrated through their programme their understanding, through research, of their chosen subject. The most successful products contextualised the work of the photojournalist with contemporary practice. The learners were able to bring in issues of historical developments, past and current practice and approaches to capture in this work. It also allowed the learner to demonstrate understanding of cultural, economic, political and social factors through their investigations into photojournalism and its affect on audience and on their own work.
- Web logs that captured their thoughts on the planning and production process for their capture experimentations. The learners were able to discuss their progress, ideas and skills through the use of this medium.

Each learner had a process portfolio that contained their planning materials, research logs and investigations into the products they had produced. In this instance the process portfolio was quite weak compared to the strength of the work presented as media products by the learner.

General comments

Teachers must ensure that learners produce a process portfolio that demonstrates in Unit 1 Capture:

- Understanding of past and current practice
- Planning using appropriate work-related planning documentation
- Experimentation using a range of techniques
- Production of a capture product
- Understanding of the monitoring of work and working processes that informs the learner's own practice.

Teachers need to consider the process driven nature of this qualification. Learners need to provide evidence of the process rather than simply producing a product. It can be seen by the above list that only one learning outcome is attributed to the production of a capture product. There needs to be evidence throughout the process portfolio of the learner reflecting on and monitoring their work in order to refine their own work. Retrospective evaluation will not provide sufficient evidence to meet Learning Outcome 5.

In order to achieve the highest marks the teacher must provide learners with assignment briefs that are written to address Mark Band 3. This allows all learners access to the highest marks.

Teachers must ensure that all the elements of each Learning Outcome are delivered and assessed. It is important for each learner to demonstrate coverage of all the Learning Outcome in their work.

Teachers must provide an explanation of the language used in the mark bands. For example, 'critically discuss' should involve the learner in analysis, comparison and contrasting when comparing their work to professional practice.

Teachers must make use of observation records to compliment their assessment of issues such as management of projects, management of health and safety procedures and substantial and innovative contributions to production of materials.

Teachers should provide feedback on assessment to learners that allow them to action plan for success. This feedback should be firmly linked to the assessment focus in each learning outcome.

Teachers and learners should use the most efficient techniques and methods for presenting evidence for assessment. A range of assessment tools can be used to encourage and motivate learners. As seen in the samples moderated in this series the learners were able to experiment, at an early stage in their development, with a wide range of techniques and methods of capture. The use of web logs motivated the learners to keep comprehensive records of their skill development and a personal record of their achievement.

Research plans for planning and production should be clearly identified and sources of information recorded accurately by learners. Un-annotated downloads from the internet do not provide evidence of learner's ability to undertake research. Learners should keep comprehensive records of their research activities using appropriate logging techniques to demonstrate the depth and validity of their research work.

Planning for production documentation must clearly indicate the work undertaken by a learner. The use of photocopied team production documentation does not provide evidence of the learner's contribution to the planning process. Learners must clearly annotate the evidence that they have produced. Planning documentation should be relevant to the work related nature of the qualification. Teachers must ensure that documentation follows creative and media industry practices.

Assessed work presented for moderation must comply with the evidence requirements as laid down in the section 'Evidence for assessment' in each unit.

Consortium leaders and teachers should consider the wider use of technology in the delivery and assessment of the Diploma. This may be contentious as many local education authorities do not allow learners access to technology such as YouTube and Facebook. However, there should be an opportunity for Diploma learners to be granted access to technology that they can use to improve the quality of their research and production work and their communication skills.

Statistics

Level 1 Unit 1 Introduction to Creative and Media Skills

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B
Boundary mark	60	54	39	24

Level 2 Unit 3 Artefact

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C
Boundary mark	60	54	44	34	24

Level 3 Unit 1 Capture

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	E	D	E
Boundary mark	60	54	48	42	36	30	24

Centres are reminded that this is the first examination for this new specification and that coursework boundaries may change in the following series

Notes

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

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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