

Examiners' Report November 2009

IGCSE

Edexcel IGCSE Art & Design

(4310, 4311, 4312, 4313)

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of the IGCSE Art and Design 4310 - 4313 to help and support centres in future submissions. Once again the number of candidates has increased significantly from the previous year's November series. The IGCSE specification aims to provide all centres with the framework to develop and devise courses for Art and Design across all four endorsements, by encouraging learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. This November report acts as a reinforcement of comments made in the May 2009 report. Submissions this year whether they were for coursework or exam once again showed the rich cultural and environmental diversity of the various countries submitting work.

The fine art endorsement has always produces the highest number of entries however a rather pleasing development this year however is the increased number of candidate's entered for graphics, textiles and the photography endorsements.

- Fine Art,
- Textiles,
- Photography
- Graphic Design.

Assessment of coursework in centres prior to external moderation

Once again there are a number of new centres submitting coursework this year therefore it might be helpful to look again at the requirements.

It is important for centres to use and be familiar with the coursework assessment criteria on the Candidate Assessment Sheet prior to marking work in the centre. In the May series the majority of centres clearly understood assessment procedures for coursework however there was a small number of centres who needed to become more familiar with this procedure which is clearly stated in the specification.

- All four assessment objectives should be met.
- All are equally weighted and have no priority.
- The final mark awarded should be a 'holistic' assessment out of 100.
- The grid should be used in conjunction with the grade descriptions given in the specification.
- A candidate's response may not satisfy every one of the assessment criteria for a particular mark band to receive a mark within that band. The coursework could meet the descriptor from a higher or lower mark band on some criteria. For example a candidate might be competent in A01, A03 and A04 but only sound in A02. The 'best fit' approach should be used to determine the mark band which corresponds most closely to the overall quality of the candidate's response.
- Once the coursework has been allocated to a mark band the final mark should be refined to a specific mark. Then recorded on the candidate sheet.

Most centres who submit coursework for moderation have a clear understanding of the marking requirements. Disappointingly there are still a very small number of

centres who have little understanding of the marking requirements. Marking by these centres can best be described as erratic and inconsistent. Marking tended to be lenient with little evidence seen in the work submitted by candidates to justify the final mark given by the centre. For example after moderation some candidate's marks had moved from the confident mark band range into the sound mark band. Centres are reminded that the mark awarded should be an aggregate, overall mark, 'holistic' assessment out of 100. The marking grid should be used in conjunction with the grade descriptions given on page 18 and 19 of the specification.

Centres are reminded that if there is more than one teacher of the coursework in the centre, there should be internal standardisation of marking standards in the centre prior to sending work for external moderation.

It is important that marks awarded are based only on what is presented, and that teacher examiners are not influenced by other factors such as the candidate's previous achievement, or the teacher's perception of the candidate's potential or industriousness.

Endorsements

Within the four endorsements offered the majority of centres had a very clear understanding of the requirements laid down in the specification content. However this year there were a very small number of centres who entered candidates for the textiles, graphics and photography endorsements who had 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 devising teaching and learning programmes.

The Assessment Objectives

The assessment objectives should be seen as inter-related activities not stand alone components. Unfortunately there are some centres that still approach the assessment objectives in chronological order. When structuring teaching and learning activities in the production of the coursework and in the preparatory six week period for the examination, this should be borne in mind.

Coursework

However centres structure their courses they should ensure that the chosen themes or genres are sufficiently flexible to allow candidates to make a personal and informed response. This in turn allows candidates to pursue their own creative journey of discovery. Themes and genres which are insufficiently broad result in submissions from centres in which candidates work is very similar. A number of centres need to place greater emphasis on working from first hand experience.

It was disappointing to see a number of candidates, with signs of creative potential, at the lower end of the mark range, because they had failed to submit evidence for a particular assessment objective. In the majority of centres courses had been constructed to ensure that all assessment objectives were covered across the mark range. Many centres offered their students a variety of approaches to materials and media resulting in some very exciting outcomes.

Submitting coursework and examination for assessment

The format for submitting coursework and examination are made clear in the specification. It was pleasing to note that this year that the number of centres allowing candidates when submitting coursework/examination preparatory studies to overlap or mount work on the back of the research sheets had dropped significantly.

Reviewing, refining and modifying research for coursework and 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 which illustrate this area of coursework and examination in the May 2009 submissions. It is hoped these points will help centres improve the overall standard of their candidates ability to review, refine and modify ideas as they progresses.

Strengths

- Appropriate and ongoing annotation.
- Recording using an exciting range of 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.
- Experimenting with media

Weaknesses

- Some centres presented research where there was too much emphasis on writing.
- They produced unedited 'downloads' from the internet.
- There was an over-reliance on secondary images.
- Research was superficial, incomplete or disorganised.
- Copying with no purpose.
- No sequential journey.
- Little visual analysis.
- Research where the intentions were not clear.
- One or more of the AO's was missing.
- Little understanding of the requirements of the specification.

By improving the quality of research it is hoped that candidate's final personal response will be ambitious and imaginative.

Practical examination and preparatory studies

Those candidates who performed of 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 Edexcel website to enable them to prepare teaching and learning resources to support their candidates in the six week period.

Preparatory period

The six week preparatory period prior to the exam is a taught period where art staff 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 exam. Students should avoid having a trial run at this stage, as work can often become stale and dull if it is just repeated again in the exam.

Ten hour examination

The theme of 'Cover' for the November series produced a very diverse response by candidates and clearly inspired many of them. **Cover as protection** produced some interesting imaginative images including gas masks and science fiction characters. Research was often very thorough looking at cover as protection from ancient times to the present day. This was supported by annotation and detailed sketches. **Cover from the weather** using umbrellas and not surprisingly the work of Renoir produced some effective artist's research and final outcomes. **Body cover** on various animals proved a popular choice for a number of candidates who used a variety of media in producing close up and large scale images of animals. These were eventually taken into abstract forms for the final outcome inspired by a variety of artists including Juan Gris. Images of natural body coverings such as henna and scarred skin produced some interesting images. Effective painted studies were made of traditional brightly coloured kangas showing a careful understanding of folds and pattern in materials. **Natural cover** saw a number of candidates producing quite outstanding work making detailed studies of a variety of natural objects including shells, acorns, walnuts, pistachio and chestnuts. Candidates produced work in a variety of media including low relief work in corrugated card, a variety of paint, pastel, oil pastel, biro and batik. Inspiration also came from such artists as Paul Klee and Georgia O'Keefe. **Run for cover** produced some very forceful images regarding political and social issues showing images of police with protective clothing on when controlling groups of people or crowds. **Cover up** produced some very interesting research and final outcomes based on identity theft and how people hide their faces with their hands or clothing to remain anonymous. The artists Banksy and Käthe Kollwitz provided suitable inspiration for the work.

Summary

Good teaching, well structured courses and appropriate resourcing ensure that candidates perform to their full potential in the examination and coursework. There was much evidence of this in the November 2009 series. **Disappointingly however there were some centres submitting work who had little understanding of the requirements of the specification.** To move forward these centres must become much more familiar with the IGCSE specification, they may also wish to take

advantage of the various Professional Development and Training opportunities being offered in 2010 information for 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 for both coursework and examination underpinned by the assessment objectives.
- A clear understanding of the specification content for the endorsements.
- Good teaching and learning stem from an emphasis on recording visually from first hand 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 covering all assessment objectives.
- Internal assessment of coursework needs to be approached with impartial detachment to ensure accuracy.

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