

# Examiners' Report Summer 2009

IGCSE

Edexcel IGCSE Art and Design

(4310, 4311, 4312, 4313)

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Summer 2009

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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 entry with a number of new countries entering candidates for the first time. 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.

Entries for this year's IGCSE came from many parts of the world including Bermuda, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Greece, India, Kenya, Libya, Mexico, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Sri-Lanka, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom the United Arab Emirates. 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 'Broken' for the May series produced a very diverse response by candidates and clearly inspired many of them.

**Broken and cracked** proved to be very popular for many candidates. Candidates used their own local environment as a source of inspiration using cameras to initially record ideas such as broken shutters and doors, peeling paint and the broken windows of old factories and warehouses in a state of disrepair. Many produced realistic images others took it a stage further producing semi abstract or abstract images from the information they had recorded. It was a pleasure to see the very high standard of the finished pieces. Other images which proved popular in this section were the images of old people's faces and hands many in close up. Another popular choice in this section was the broken and cracked shells of various nuts in various stages from whole to fully broken. Many higher mark range candidates produced high quality work using a variety of media including biro, water colour, pastel and acrylic. Fragmented images of faces in broken and cracked mirrors also proved to be very popular. Once they had produced their own images candidates made informed connections with a variety of artists Francis Bacon and Chuck Close were popular choices which allowed candidates to develop and explore ideas further. A less popular choice in this section and depending on availability but again using their own local environment candidates used cemeteries, old monuments also broken and cracked artefacts as a source of inspiration.

Food and fruit **broken in pieces** proved to be a very popular choice of subject in this section. Candidates in the exceptional, fluent and confident mark range clearly enjoyed the challenge of produced some very effective realistic images in a variety of media. A number even tried broken egg shells. Juan Sanchez Cotan proved to be an artist who inspired many candidates. Broken bottles was an area many candidates produced some very high quality work even lower mark range candidates rose to the challenge. Many candidates went on to produce interesting imaginative final pieces inspired from broken bottles. The artist Janet Fish clearly inspired many candidates when looking at glass and the effect of light. A number of candidates produced some interesting final outcomes using mosaics or broken crockery as a starting point.

**Broken up** probably saw the least number of images inspired by the ideas. Roy Lichtenstein proved a popular artist in this section particularly with regards to aircraft breaking up. Broken up and cracked surfaces allowed candidates to demonstrate their understanding and use of the formal elements. Images of riot police breaking up rioters allowed some candidates to demonstrate their understanding of political issues they felt strongly about.

**Broken down** produced some very interesting and quite thought provoking images by candidates. Work included images of homeless people, representations of cultural and commercial repression of people. Candidates produced effective research and final outcomes of images of people affected by depression and other types of illness. Many used annotation in their research to explain their thinking behind the images used. Digital images of themselves or their friends showing various emotions supported their work effectively. Freda Kahlo and Edvard Munch proved to be a popular source of inspiration to many candidates in this section. Old cars proved popular and



once again candidates used their own local environment to conduct visual research using digital photography to record the images found. Some very bold realistic images were produced in a variety of media.

**Broken and discarded** shells were a popular starting point for many candidates in this section. Higher mark range candidates produced strong observational drawings showing a clear understanding of the basic elements and using a variety of media. Distorted glass and plastic bottles also proved popular. Once again many candidates used their own local environment to source their research by photographing recycling centres and junk yards from this initial research many candidates went on to produce imaginative finished outcomes.

**Broken hearted** proved to be a very popular section. It was interesting to see how many candidates once again photographed their friends to portray various emotions. Going on to manipulate these images digital images using photo shop. Many candidates went on to develop their ideas in an imaginative /symbolic way using chains and ivy. Edward Hopper proved to be inspiring an artist in this section.

The theme is a starting point and candidates may work from any of the starting points suggested by the theme or they may develop a relevant starting point of their own on the theme of Broken.

In general it was a pleasure and privilege to see the quality of work produced by candidates for their examination. It was clear that the quality of teaching and learning in some centres was outstanding. These centres are to be commended for their enthusiasm, imagination and endeavour to provide candidates with the platform to give their best in the examination

## 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 May 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 2009/10 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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