

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2014

International GCSE
Fine Art (4FA0), Graphic Design
(4GC0), Photography (4PY0),
Textiles (4TE0).

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CONTENTS	Page
1. Introduction	4
2. Edexcel website support	4
3. Endorsements	5
4. The Assessment Objectives.	6
5. Assessment overview	6
6. Reviewing, refining and modifying research for the practical examination.	7
7. Practical examination and preparatory studies	8
8. The six week preparatory period	8
9. Photography endorsement submission	9
10. Ten hour examination	10
11. Submitting preparatory studies and ten hour examination for external assessment	11
12. An example of a Fine Art Endorsement	11
13. Summary	12
14. Centres wishing to move their candidates forward and improve their performance must address the following issues.	13
15. Grade boundaries	14

Introduction

Entries for this year's International GCSE Art & Design specification came from many countries including, Bangladesh, Bermuda, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, France, Falkland Islands, Germany, Greece, Qatar, Russian Federation, Oman, Korean Republic, Kuwait, India, Kenya, Libya, Macau, Malaysia, Pakistan, Poland, Singapore, Sri-Lanka, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States of America. All entries for the examination once again showed the rich cultural diversity of the various countries making submissions.

The International GCSE specification aims to provide all centres with the framework to develop and devise courses for Art and Design across all four endorsements:

- Fine Art
- Graphic Design.
- Photography
- Textiles

The specification is 100% examination, externally set and marked. Centres can enter students for more than one endorsement in any one examination session. Fine art continues to be the most popular endorsement chosen by centres followed by graphic design, photography and textiles. As in previous years there has been a 10% increase in the number of entries for International GCSE. A key feature of the specification is that it allows teachers the freedom to approach the assessment objectives in a way which best suits them and their students.

Edexcel website support

The '**Centre Guidance Document**' which can be found on the Edexcel website covers;

- Key events and deadlines
- Entry information
- Endorsed titles
- Assessment summary
- Summary of scheme of assessment
- External examination and preparatory studies
- The practical examination
- Private candidates
- After the examination
- Instructions for the dispatch of work
- Special consideration
- Malpractice
- Grade awarding
- Enquiries about results

With regard to administration, not all centres submitted authentication forms with candidate's submissions.

In the 2014 series a number of centres submitted research and final outcomes on sheets larger than A2. A small number of centres submitted more than the required three preparatory sheets; in contrast some centres only submitted two sheets of preparatory work. A number of centres did not always adhere to correct labelling of work.

Clear instructions are given in the specification and 'Centre Guidance Document' regarding the requirements of the examination.

If you have a question about the International GCSE Art and Design specification '**Ask the Expert**' is a resource you may decide to use. Information about this resource can be found on the Edexcel website under information for teachers

Exemplar materials for International GCSE can be viewed and download from the Edexcel International Art teacher's community forum website: http://community.edexcel.com/art_and_design/m/artigcse/default.aspx This is a resource for existing centres, those new to the qualification or those who are considering delivering it in their centres. The exemplar materials show examples of candidates work ranging from exceptional to weak with comments by the Chief Examiner and with written comments by the students taken from their annotated research sheets.

A programme of professional development and training, covering various aspects of the specification and examination can also be found on the website for 2014-2015. One training event took place during the last academic year, which was on 'Effective research methods in art and design'. This event took place in Sri Lanka. Centres may also wish to contact their Regional Development Managers for further information and support.

Endorsements

Within the four endorsements offered the majority of centres have a very clear understanding of the requirements laid down in the specification content. There are still a very small number of centres that enter candidates for the various endorsements who have 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 planning and structuring courses for future submissions.

It was noted by examiners that in this year's submissions there were some heavy bold coloured patterns appearing which would have sat comfortably inside Graphic Design but was popular in the fine art endorsement.

It was also observed by examiners that in some photography submissions they had used the theme layers as a way of working rather than as a subject. However some had also used both.

The Assessment Objectives

The assessment objectives should be seen, as inter-related activities not stand alone components. Unfortunately there are some centres as noted by examiners that still approach the assessment objectives in chronological order. When structuring courses and in the preparatory six week period for the examination, this should be borne in mind. However centres structure their courses they should ensure the chosen themes or genres are sufficiently flexible to allow candidates to make a personal and informed response. Many centres are now using past examination themes when planning and structuring courses. This in turn allows candidates to pursue their own individual creative journey of discovery. Within this planning a number of centres need to place greater emphasis on working from firsthand experience.

It was disappointing to see a number of highly skilled candidates, with signs of creative potential, at the middle range of marks, because they had failed to submit evidence for a particular assessment objective. AO2 continues to be an assessment objective that some candidates fail to show any evidence for. In doing so centres severely disadvantage these candidates.

AO1. Record observations, experiences and ideas which are appropriate to intentions.

AO2. Analyse and evaluate images, objects and artefacts, making informed connections with the work of others.

AO3. Develop and explore ideas, using a variety of media and processes that are appropriate to intentions.

AO4. Review and refine ideas, modifying work as it progresses, before presenting a coherent personal response.

Assessment overview

- Examination piece (maximum size A2) with six weeks preparatory time and 10 hours examination time
- Up to three sheets of preparatory studies (maximum size A2 sheet) carried out during the six- week preparatory period
- 100 marks are available for this assessment

Reviewing, refining and modifying research for the practical examination.

With the help of the centre it is important that candidates review, refine and modify their submission for presentation. Candidates must choose the work which best illustrates their ability at covering all four assessment objectives.

Below are strengths and weaknesses highlighted by examiners, which illustrate this area of the examination in the May 2014 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 progress.

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 a range of media
- Primary source images
- Good advice and guidance given by centres regarding presentation of research.

Weaknesses

- Re-iterating ideas on the research sheets.
- Some centres presented research where there was too much emphasis on writing.
- 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 not covered particularly AO2
- Little understanding of the requirements of the specification.
- Not using all space available on research sheets
- Small scale of images on research sheets (photography)

By improving the quality of research it is hoped that candidate's final personal response will be ambitious, creative 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 (1st of February) to enable them to prepare teaching and learning resources to support their candidates in the six week period.

The six week preparatory period

The six week preparatory period prior to the exam is a taught period where art teachers 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 examination.

Where centres achieved very high marks, this was the result of a highly focused and dedicated approach to supporting candidates.

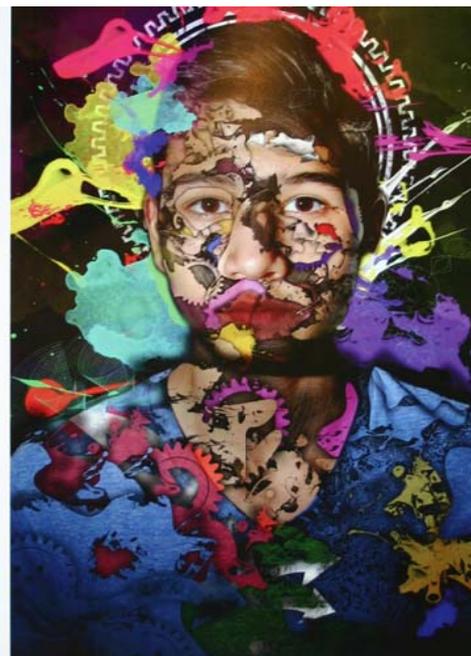
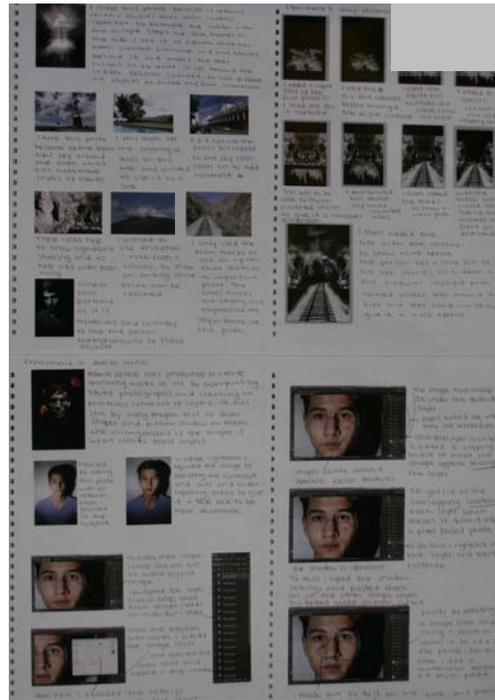
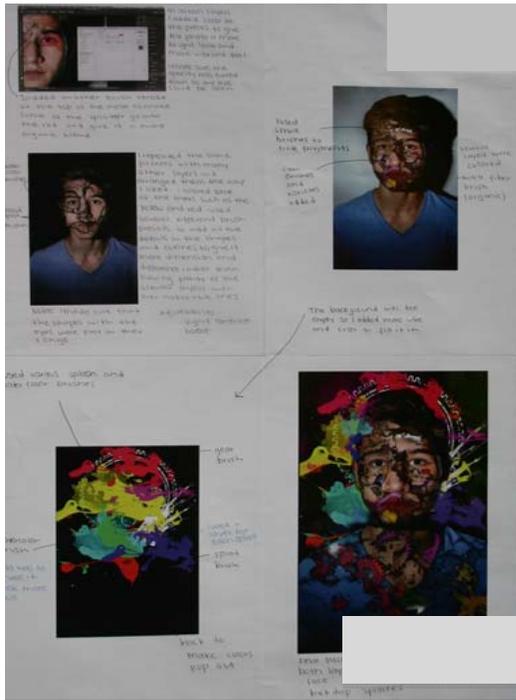
In some centres there was a distinct lack of evidence for AO2 or the research was superficial this then had an impact on the resulting achievements of the candidates. As in previous years examiners commented that some centres failed to show evidence for AO2 resulting in these candidates losing marks. In contrast the majority of centres had a clear understanding of the assessment objectives, producing very personal and individual work.

It was pleasing to note that many centres gave candidates the opportunity to use a wide range of materials using a variety of processes.

Within the research presented for assessment it was noted by examiners there was an excess of secondary images used by a number of candidates. Too much copying and repetitive work can waste vital space on the research sheets. It is important that centres balance the level of primary and secondary sources used by candidates. Examiners also noted that where candidates reiterated images on their research sheets it prevented these candidates from developing their full potential.

First hand photography was effectively used by a number of candidates. Imaginative role play situations were created and recorded to support final outcomes. A number of candidates also used photography when planning and setting up still life groups and in recording the process of three dimensional works.

An example of a Photography Endorsement



Ten hour examination

Examiners noted there were good expansive and imaginative ideas triggered by the theme 'Layers'. The sub headings of the main theme; **Multiple layers, Layers within society, Layers of clothes, Skin layers, Food and drink layers, Layers of the forest** were the most popular sub headings.

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 layers.

Examiners commented that many candidates produced individual, personal and creative responses to the theme. Candidates produced final outcomes, which were sustained and focussed. Successful contextual references included, Wayne Thiebaud, Danny Quirk, Abbas Kowasari, Glenn Michael, Howard Hodgkin, Charles Sheeler and Christo.

The observations below were made by examiners; they are generic and must not be seen as a blanket list of criticism or praise for individual centres.

- High quality outcomes.
- Many lower mark range candidates were able to tackle all the AO's, an encouraging sign that they are following a structured process.
- Good use of primary sources seen in the photography endorsements.
- Closely observed and focused observations provided candidates with a wealth of information from which to develop their ideas.
- Some centres overlooked the development of ideas in AO3 leading to reiteration and the collaging of a final response, which doesn't lead through when following the journey through from the preparatory work sheets.
- A number of candidates referenced artists on their research sheets but failed to connect their research to inform and develop their own work.
- Inappropriate materials used by some candidates e.g. oil pastels used for fine detailed work.
- Some excellent examples of relief work to provide texture and contrast.
- Good examples of candidates using their own environment and culture as a resource.
- Some candidates consolidated ideas and processes too early making it difficult to find evidence to support the assessment objectives.
- A number of graphic design submissions contained dense and complex text with a lack of visual evidence.
- Complex manipulation of skills was evident including accomplished stencil paper cutting.
- Layers were interpreted as layers of media and technique and concept.
- Candidates showed confidence in using a variety of media including print making techniques, collage, and photography.

- Digital manipulation played a large part in experimentation and exploration of media.
- Photography was used as an essential tool by a number of candidates
- Some centres viewed annotation as an essential part of the process.
- A number of candidates had drawn on the work of local contemporary artists.

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.

Submitting preparatory studies and ten hour examination for external assessment

If the final piece, is fragile bulky or larger than A2 in size, the centre must make arrangements to photograph the work. This year we also had some centres submitting research sheets larger than A2 in size. The format for submitting work for the examination is made clear in the specification and examination paper. Further guidance can also be seen in the 'Centre guidance document' highlighted earlier in this report

An example of a Fine Art Endorsement





Summary

Good teaching, well structured courses and appropriate resourcing ensure that candidates perform to their full potential in the examination. There was much evidence of this in the May 2014 series. **Disappointingly however there were some centres submitting work that had little understanding of the requirements of the specification.** To move forward these centres must become much more familiar with the International GCSE Art & Design specification. They may also wish to take advantage of the various Professional Development and Training

opportunities being offered in 2014-15; 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 underpinned by the assessment objectives in preparation for the examination.
- A clear understanding of the specification content for the endorsements.
- Good teaching and learning stem from an emphasis on recording visually from firsthand 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 at covering all assessment objectives.
- Establish effective research methods for candidates.

Grade Boundaries

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

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

