Grade boundary information for this subject is available on the WJEC public website at: 
https://www.wjecservices.co.uk/MarkToUMS/default.aspx?I=en

Online Results Analysis

WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC secure website. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

Annual Statistical Report

The annual Statistical Report (issued in the second half of the Autumn Term) gives overall outcomes of all examinations administered by WJEC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of the Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Response and Intentions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Practice/Working through the Assessment Objectives</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Initiatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Statements</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing National Standards</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This year sees the first assessment for the new GCSE Eduqas Art & Design specification, which is has been very well received; and is widely regarded as a refinement to what was already deemed a successful WJEC model.

There is now greater clarity in relation to the assessment objectives:

- The mark scheme establishes distinct levels of achievement through clear and consistent performance descriptors.
- The inclusion of the indicative content for all titles 'unpacks' the assessment objectives in some detail.
- A user-friendly checklist succinctly summarises the main assessment points.
- The Guide for Teachers is an invaluable reference to establish the overriding philosophy behind the new specification.

The new specification retains the portfolio format for Component 1, (essentially a selection of the candidate's work that best fulfils the assessment objectives), which allows for a variety of approaches in which to structure the course to the strengths of the teaching staff and candidates alike.

The importance of review and reflection is emphasised via the new requirement on annotation and the compulsory creative statement for both components. Finally, there is a renewed focus upon the value of drawing in all its different forms, throughout the titles, as a means of communication.

To assist in the introduction of the new specification, CPD events have been held nationally over the past two years that have expanded upon these changes and provided colleagues with skills to help facilitate its implementation. Marked exemplars across the titles have also been available online, where, in addition to written comments, a colour-coded system has been trialled in relation to the performance descriptors, which clearly indicates how the mark for each assessment objective has been established.

There is also a different format for the centre report; the adoption of a tick box approach in relation to the assessment objectives has been designed to provide centres with a report that seeks to highlight strengths and areas for further development in a more precise manner. This is a trial and will be subject to further review, (including a survey to procure feedback from centres), before consideration as a replacement to the traditional written report.

The following report closely reflects the main findings of our team, comprising 70 moderators, who visited centres during June 2018. Key aspects include:
- The fundamental importance of the organisation of the course to allow candidates to discover and realise their potential.
- The essential values of ensuring that candidate’s responses are their own and have clear personal intent.
- Good practice and the effective use of time (this has been documented in relation to each assessment objective).
- The value of drawing, annotation and the creative statements.
- Establishing national standards

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ART & DESIGN
GCSE
Summer 2018

ORGANISATION OF THE COURSE

Moderators reported that within the Portfolio component, a wide range of approaches had been pursued, which had enriched the candidates' learning and empowered them to develop their own ideas, culminating in outcomes that were indeed personal, imaginative and fully integrated within the main body of work. Programmes of study that enabled the candidates to build upon their strengths and grow in confidence provided a secure foundation for success. Moderators also encountered an excellent range of appropriate themes for study.

Different formats for the organisation of the Portfolio component included:

- An initial foundation period in Year 10, which enabled candidates to acquire a range of skills and techniques, knowledge and understanding, from which to work to their strengths and interests to produce a major body of study. This extensive period of time certainly enabled candidates to explore all of the Assessment Objectives in considerable depth and in many cases proved an effective 'rehearsal' for the Externally Set Assignment. In the best examples, there was a clear and appropriate balance between teacher-directed study in the foundation period, and independent, (and supported) candidate investigations in the major body of work. Moderators reported how these initially structured experiences were enabling candidates to develop more confident, independent and personal lines of enquiry as their work matured.

- A two unit approach was also in evidence and, where there was a clear transference of skills and learning from one unit to another, (and usually where the second unit was the more substantial unit) this arrangement also proved to be effective.

- Moderators, however, did express concern where centres had implemented an excessive number of short focused, (sometimes unrelated) tasks for the duration of the portfolio component, where candidates progressed to the same level in each task and there was little evidence of growth and maturity of ideas and skills. In these situations, candidates frequently did not have an opportunity to undertake a more substantial body of work which would have brought their ideas to a coherent conclusion. Indeed, with this particular format, outcomes were often very thin.

Invariably, a well-structured Portfolio component, where progression and engagement were evident, ensured a successful Externally Set Assignment component. In this component, centres often organised their schedules so that candidates first sought out contextual sources that were relevant to their theme, followed by recording from their own sources. It was equally evident, however, that the reverse arrangement produced very personal developments, where candidates firstly gathered and worked from their own sources, generating their own lines of enquiry, before unearthing artists and artworks that were particularly pertinent to their ideas.

The equal distribution of marks for each of the Assessment Objectives, however, does not necessitate an equal distribution of time.
- Where an appreciably larger period of time had been allocated for Assessment Objective 2 Creative Making, the experimentation, development and refinement of ideas was clear to see and outcomes were coherent and substantial.

- Moderators reported that in some centres, candidates had doggedly sought out a formidable number of artists, then embarked upon several personal responses to the artwork they had researched, and with very little time remaining to establish their own ideas and move them forward, it was almost inevitable that the final outcome would be disappointing.

Katherine Lady Berkeley (Graphic Communication)  Hardenhuish (Art, Craft & Design)
PERSONAL RESPONSE AND INTENTIONS

It is encouraging to report, that in a large majority of centres, throughout both components, a high degree of personal engagement was clearly evident. This was reflected in the diversity and creative use of media and the candidates’ thoroughly imaginative and expressive responses. Moderators commented upon the truly exceptional work achieved across a breadth of differing contexts. This was especially so in the Externally Set Assignment, where, in most centres, candidates had benefited from their Portfolio experiences and produced work of evidently greater individuality and maturity. The questions, ‘the power of words’ and ‘connections,’ generated particularly enthusiastic and personal responses, often with socially conscious and political overtones.

Moderators reported that:

- In the latter stages of the Portfolio component and the Externally Set Assignment in particular, it was encouraging to see, in so many submissions, a clear personal intention and sustained progression of work. Candidates were reflecting on their work, making considered decisions, annotating them succinctly, and finding appropriate contextual sources as the need arose. The candidates’ intentions were unambiguous.

- Moderators encountered with some frequency, the situation where, a number of contextual sources had been investigated and the candidates had completed a few responses ‘in the style of’ the particular artwork. This would have been repeated several times. In this case, it is important that the artists’ work informs that of the candidate; and the candidate’s own work grows out of their ‘new’ understanding. There were occasions, however, where the study of artists’ works determined the candidate’s own work to such an extent that they found it very difficult to establish their own ideas and intentions. In extreme cases, candidates had begun to rely on replication of their contextual sources in order to generate creative responses.

- In a few centres, it was evident from the sample of work exhibited that an excessive level of control had been exercised in the construction of the programme of study in both components. Evidence has repeatedly shown that over-prescription rarely enables the candidate’s ideas to prosper and flourish. There were occasions where, regardless of the candidate’s level of potential or attainment, specific artists had been prescribed throughout the course, identical primary sources had been employed and very similar methods of study had been imposed across the cohort. In such cases, candidates’ intentions were often difficult to determine.
GOOD PRACTICE / WORKING THROUGH THE ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

As has already been alluded to, the appropriate allocation of time for each of the Assessment Objectives is vital in the Portfolio and Externally Set Assignment components. Moderators encountered situations where too little and/or too much time had been spent on fulfilling particular Assessment Objectives. The following comments identify good practice, but also take into account the efficient use of time. This is especially pertinent in light of a large majority of centres reporting a substantial loss of Art & Design teaching time throughout the academic year.

Assessment Objective 1 Contextual Understanding

Moderators encountered wide variations in approaches and quality in the evidence presented for this Assessment Objective:

- In the strongest submissions, candidates’ comments were substantial, incisive and perceptive, often accompanied by visual means of making their understanding apparent. The best examples demonstrated a pleasing degree of rigour and insightful analysis of contextual sources, followed by evidence of the candidates applying what they had learned in ways which truly informed the development of their own ideas. Various systems were in evidence to scaffold the candidate’s learning. Rod Taylor’s ‘Content, Form, Process and Mood’ was popular; as was comparing and contrasting the works of artists, craftspeople and designers.

- The majority of candidates were able to articulate their findings quite well through description and interpretation, but only to a lesser extent through analysis. Although not widespread, moderators did find evidence of analytical work at all levels. The use of the formal elements often represented an appropriate starting point from which to ‘dissect’ a source and generate a personal response.

- Comments made by the candidates should illustrate the level of their understanding: downloaded text of biographical detail; prescribed comments relating to artworks duplicated across the cohort; or sophisticated vocabulary that is unlikely to have been articulated by the candidate, are of little value.

- On occasions, images of artwork were bereft of any comment at all. Some level of understanding could be implied from the candidate’s associated work. In these situations, digital recordings of discussions might be considered as an alternative.

- A conclusion reached by many moderators, however, was that in some submissions, from candidates of all levels of ability, there was an abundance of contextual sources that were repeatedly investigated to the same level of understanding, using the same format. Candidates would indeed have benefited from researching fewer sources, in greater depth and through a variety of means.
In some situations, where the study of contextual sources was truly excessive, some of the time spent on Assessment Objective 1 Contextual Understanding activities could certainly have been re-allocated more profitably to another objective without impacting upon the Assessment Objective 1 Contextual Understanding mark. A central purpose of studying contextual sources, apart from broadening the candidate’s understanding and knowledge of their particular discipline, is to inform their own work: investigating artists’ work is not an end in itself but a means to an end.

Assessment Objective 2 Creative Making

This all-encompassing objective was indeed a strength in many centres. A wealth of materials and techniques was evident throughout the titles and there was also evidence of a broad creative digital experience through the use of apps / Photoshop. Where centres had encouraged risk taking and creative play with materials and ideas, exciting and innovative passages of work emerged, and annotation, documenting reflection and selection, was integral to the process. In most centres the process of moving from initial ideas through exploration, experimentation and development towards a final outcome was apparent. The refinement of ideas, however, was much less in evidence, although where centres had allocated sufficient time for reflection and modification, the outcomes were invariably mature and sophisticated.

Moderators identified a number of situations where opportunities for stronger Assessment Objective 2 Creative Making work had not been taken:

- Several designs had been established, from which one design had been selected for a final outcome, with no further development or refinement beyond this point.
- Stronger elements within the creative body of work had been overlooked in favour of weaker elements; the importance of evaluation and discrimination cannot be overstated.
- A series of studies / ideas had been completed (perhaps in different materials), but they remained quite separate. Cross fertilisation of studies and ideas did not take place and links and connections were not identified or explored, resulting in a lack of growth and development in the process evidence.
- On occasions, creative activity was insignificant and bore little or no relationship to the final outcome. In a similar vein, there were occasions where quite extensive creative activity had taken place, but this had been abandoned during the production of the final outcome.

The importance of this Assessment Objective cannot be over-stated, (Assessment Objective 2 Creative Making inevitably supports Assessment Objective 4 Personal Presentation) and the time allocation required to successfully address the associated criteria should not be under-estimated.

Assessment Objective 3 Reflective Recording

The value of responding to first hand sources has been established for some time and it is encouraging to report that the majority of centres shared this aim. This fundamental activity is often the driving force for a candidate’s independent and personal discoveries. Site visits too, remain invaluable for exposure to primary source material.
Recordings from sources have been predominantly drawn in pencil, but increasingly a greater variety of media has been explored. This exploration of media is often the prelude to more exciting responses. Digital technologies and their associated software have also widened candidates’ experiences.

Moderators reported that in the majority of centres:

- ‘Drawing’ from primary sources was fundamental to the art process and candidates used this ‘tool’ highly effectively to record information, articulate their ideas and communicate their intentions.

In some centres, opportunities were missed to fully address this Assessment Objective, where:

- Recording, typically in the form of pencil studies and photographs, was often repetitive in nature. Little attempt had been made to explore the formal elements in relation to the source to gain a deeper understanding. Frequently the direction of light and angle of view were not considered. On many occasions repetition, whilst possibly being the easiest option, is unfortunately less rewarding and beneficial than exploration.

- Recording was hardly relevant to the progression of work, sometimes seemingly produced as a separate entity in an attempt to satisfy the Assessment Objective.

- There was an over-reliance on secondary sources which lacked personal connection and resonance.

**Assessment Objective 4 Personal presentation**

As a very general rule, the quality of the final outcomes was very closely dependent upon the quality of work produced for the other three objectives. In a strong submission, the Assessment Objectives are mutually supportive and in the execution of these objectives the ‘whole’ certainly can be greater than the sum of its ‘parts’. Moderators reported seeing thoroughly engaging and coherent submissions and intriguing progressions of ideas, culminating in imaginative and sophisticated outcomes.

Where a submission and final outcome might not have fulfilled a candidate’s potential, the reasons might have been many and varied, but the most frequent comments from moderators related to the following aspects:

- Excessive teacher prescription (sometimes in both Portfolio and Externally Set Assignment components). There were occasions when candidates in the sample had all tackled the same Externally Set Assignment and all had produced very similar outcomes for the Portfolio.

- A shortage of time allocated to the development studies leading to the outcome.

- The final outcome unrelated to the design development.

- Individual ideas and direction were not established, often due to an over-reliance on the copying of artists’ work.

- Over-dependence on secondary sources, which had limited creative options.
ART & DESIGN
GCSE
Summer 2018
NEW INITIATIVES
DRAWING – FIT FOR PURPOSE

In general, candidates following Art, Craft and Design or Fine Art titles had covered various forms of drawing as part of a skills-based module at the start of their course. These candidates felt comfortable in using drawing to record information.

The emphasis on drawing in the new specification, however, is there to establish the importance of drawing across all disciplines as ‘a means of communication’ or ‘drawing for purpose’. In all areas, drawing can quickly convey ideas and be used to explore potential; it illuminates the thought processes.

In some centres, moderators have reported seeing evidence of a pleasing breadth of drawing processes which had a direct relevance to the specialist areas being studied. In other centres, they encountered a weakness in this respect. Drawing in terms of the development of designs or the exploration of alternatives was lacking from all disciplines and here it must be stressed, it is the quality of the idea / design being expressed that is being rewarded, (not the technical quality of the drawing).

Within Photography, examples of drawing would include: sketches to plan shoots and storyboards, within Textile Design, drawing to illustrate fashion designs and in 3D Design, drawing to explore different ways of construction. Sometimes drawing had been factored into separate skills modules or mini workshops.

It would seem that the central purpose of the new initiative has not been fully accomplished and this area requires support and development. Eduqas will look to provide support in this respect through online resources and within future CPD events.
The quality of annotation varied greatly. In many centres, it was thorough, reflective and well integrated, sitting alongside contextual references and practical investigations in sketchbooks. In other centres annotation was brief, perfunctory and unfortunately lacked insight or depth. Various devices had been employed to assist in annotating work: key word charts, art dictionaries and writing frameworks to name but a few.

The specification states clearly the opportunities that are available for annotation:

Candidates may use annotation or more extended forms of writing to show how they have met any one, or any combination, of the Assessment Objectives. In Assessment Objective 1 Contextual Understanding, it is expected that written work will demonstrate critical and contextual understanding. In Assessment Objective 2 Creative Making, for example, written commentary may be used to consider the relationships between practical working methods and outcomes, as well as demonstrating ongoing critical review. In Assessment Objective 3 Reflective Recording, candidates may use written notes, in conjunction with drawing, as a means of recording observations and demonstrating critical reflection and insight into their investigations. In Assessment Objective 4 Personal Presentation, for example, candidates may use annotation to add meaning to their work and to evaluate their working processes.

A word of caution, however, annotation is a means to an end. It is the process of reflection, and the subsequent recording of it, that is of most benefit to the candidate. The quality of the comments is paramount (not the quantity). Moderators have noted submissions where, de rigueur, almost every image or study has been accompanied by a lengthy paragraph of prose, where the points made are often repetitive, self-evident and shed little light on the candidate’s thinking. Annotation should be pertinent and succinct; its value lies with the candidate in articulating and clarifying their thoughts as their study progresses.
Creative statements again varied in quality. The intention is that the Creative Statement is tackled periodically over the duration of the particular component as the candidate’s work progresses, (perhaps written initially in rough, within or at the back of the sketchbook). In this way it has meaning for the candidate in clarifying their thoughts and summarising their reflections at various points throughout the creative journey. A creative statement that has been completed at the end of the component serves only as an unwelcome chore, (although it does aid the moderator in quickly identifying the purpose and direction of the work).

Generally, the statements completed for the Externally Set Assignment were stronger than those for the Portfolio: for the former, the period of time is shorter, the work is more homogenous and this has generated statements with greater clarity and purpose. Once again, succinct and significant moments in the submission are preferred rather than a full description of the journey.
ESTABLISHING NATIONAL STANDARDS

Most centres have marked within tolerance, which suggests that teachers have established a clear correlation between the performance descriptors and the quality of the candidate’s work. However, moderators have reported seeing evidence of over-generous marking within too many centres. In these cases, centres should refer to the marked exemplar online. It is also worth noting that our CPD events include a marking exercise that incorporates a range of live work from a variety of disciplines which provide valuable training in aligning standards.
CONCLUSION

It is pleasing to note that Moderators have reported seeing highly accomplished work across all areas of specialism and within a variety of centre contexts. Candidates have created outstanding portfolios, often of considerable quality and rigour, which are a testament to the quality of teaching within individual centres. Well-structured and inspiring courses are clearly ensuring that individual candidates, across the breadth of attainment, are pursuing their creativity and achieving their potential; which is something to be celebrated.

Finally, it remains for me to thank centres for their considerable contribution to this series. Moderators have recounted very few difficulties with administrative matters and exhibitions of sampled work have been organised effectively to aid the moderation.

As always, it has been a pleasure to have the opportunity to encounter your candidates’ work. My best wishes for a successful and fulfilling new academic year.

David Scott