

CCEA GCSE Art & Design  
(Summer Series) 2015

# Chief Examiner's and Principal Moderator's Report

art and  
design



## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in Art and Design for this series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)



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# GCSE ART AND DESIGN

## Chief Examiner's Report

CCEA and the Art and Design Team would like to express their thanks to all centres for their hospitality and co-operation during moderation period. The effort and preparation made by centres to display candidates' work and the completion of paperwork requires a lot of teacher effort. Teachers are once again to be congratulated for all their hard work, ensuring that this year's moderation process was successful. It is also appreciated that centres continue to be supportive in releasing work for Standardisation and Agreement Trials.

### Assessment Objectives

The GCSE Art and Design Specification allow candidates the opportunities to develop their creativity and practical skills throughout the course. The Specification provides opportunities to use a wide range of media, both 2 and 3 dimensional, as well as materials, processes, techniques and technologies which can broaden the development of ideas and underpin candidates' creative thinking. Creativity and the personal development of ideas can be further developed when candidates research relevant and diverse contextual sources throughout their work. The Specification facilitates an integrated approach in the development of candidates' work and skills and progression and development at all levels of attainment.

#### **AO1    Develop their ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding**

Many candidates responded effectively to AO1 using a range of visual imagery which helped explore their ideas, link their intentions and supported developing work. Photographic source material was presented in many candidates' work as a primary observational resource. Secondary source materials were also evident in candidates' work. Direct observational studies were less evident and need to be encouraged in all centres.

Many candidates' work was relevant to both the development of their ideas and to the outcome produced. A considerable number of candidates produced strong, consistent and meaningful work, recording ideas and using thoughtful and insightful reference materials to support their development. Others candidates' work was narrowly focused and not supported well by relevant source material. These candidates were over reliant on secondary source material and imagery or biographical information.

Stronger candidates demonstrated how evaluation of contextual references informed and influenced the development of their ideas.

#### **AO2    Refine their ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes**

Experimenting with a wide range of media was evident in many candidates' work however some candidates' failed to use media in a considered and purposeful manner. Media, materials, techniques and processes should be selected thoughtfully to review, refine, modify work as it develops. Teachers should be aware of the holistic application of this assessment objective in the development of work and that each Assessment Objective is a building block which allows for meaningful development supported by the work of other artists and practitioners.

**AO3 Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms**

The majority of candidates addressed this assessment objective effectively in both units. Photography, as well as direct observational studies, was used successfully in many centres to record ideas. In Unit 2 Working to a Stimulus, the theme allowed many candidates to work from primary source materials which produced a good high quality range of analytical studies and skilful work.

The work presented by the majority of candidates was essentially 2 Dimensional Fine Art based in Unit 1 and Unit 2.

**AO4 Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating analytical and critical written, oral or other elements**

Candidates successfully planned, reviewed and developed their work to present some strong personal responses in their outcomes. The wide range of artistic and cultural influences where the students had made contextual connections was varied and frequently very personal. On the whole candidates work included creative outcomes informed by their chosen artistic influence.

Some candidates produced holistic units of work which were visually strong and self-assured, well informed and perceptive and showed progression throughout their work. While other candidates did attempt to establish a cohesive response, they were superficial rather than informed and meaningful.

Written text allowed them to express their ideas and thinking within the development of their visual work. However it was sometimes limited or not used at all in some centres. Written comments help candidates explain and clarify their intentions at various stages of their work.

## Displays of Work

Overall centre displays of candidates' work was of a good standard. Exhibitions consisted both of full mounted exhibitions and presentations of candidates' work in folders with final outcomes exhibited. Careful labelling of candidates' work also supported the moderation process. Centres are asked to ensure that where space is limited the work of individual candidates is clearly identified.

## Agreement Trials

Agreement Trials are held in the Autumn Term of the academic year. Attendance at Agreement Trials benefits teachers in all centres including receiving current examination information for this subject and viewing a selection of work from the current series of this examination and the standards at all examination mark bands.

## True Colours

The True Colours Exhibition, annually hosted by CCEA, offers everyone an opportunity to view the most outstanding work produced in the 2015 examination series. All units of work selected is a recognition of the standards of excellence achieved in this examination and underpins the quality of the teaching within the subject area. Everyone should take the opportunity to view and enjoy this exciting annual exhibition.

## Assessment Unit 1      The Core Portfolio (Controlled Assessment)

The requirements of the Specification have become well embedded in centres. It was again noted that different approaches to teaching are used by centres to deliver Unit 1, The Core Portfolio. Implementing the four Assessment Objectives is central to the teaching and learning process.

While exciting individual candidate work was present in a substantial number of centres, there was also evidence of a more formulaic teaching approach within some centres. This resulted in repetitive investigations, development and outcomes within the Core Portfolio. This more rigid approach offers less opportunities for candidates to take ownership of their own ideas and fully progress or develop their personal creativity and skills. A more flexible teacher led approach would allow greater diversity of candidate responses. It would also support candidates in preparing for more independent development within Unit 2 Working to a Stimulus.

The use of Visiting Artists' Workshops which introduced new materials, developed new skills and techniques or introduced new technologies to candidates was very positive. Skills based Workshops also proved successful in the development of candidates' development of work in the Core Portfolio, as did visits to museums and galleries.

In some but not all centres there was evidence of strong, well developed links with the work of other artists. In other centres candidates' work in this area was superficial or viewed as having little relevance within the development of the work of candidates.

While much of the work presented in Core Portfolios was 2D Fine Art based using a range of Graphic Media, candidates also presented work in a range of different disciplines. The most popular disciplines and techniques viewed in centres were printmaking and variety of textiles and ceramics techniques. There was a lack of 3D or Design based work.

## Assessment Unit 2      Working to a Stimulus

The 2015 Unit 2 Working to a Stimulus examination paper, 'My Space' was very well received by both centres and candidates of both genders. The theme was extremely accessible to the full range of ability levels.

Candidates worked from both suggested ideas within the paper as well as developing very strong personal and original interpretations to respond to the theme, 'My Space'.

The theme encouraged candidates to work directly from primary sources supported by additional reference materials. Many candidates developed their ideas imaginatively and produced interesting and unusual interpretations as final outcomes. The work of many candidates showed highly skilled to exceptional levels of analytical skills.

Popular investigations focussed on candidates using their own environments, bedrooms, countryside, cityscape, family members and friends for work which was supported by first hand imagery and was highly personal.

All candidates should be encouraged to develop their personal ideas which will make their work more meaningful and original. Supporting work should demonstrate the candidate's thinking processes towards the development of their ideas. Candidates' investigations also allowed for experimentation with materials, media and processes.

In Unit 2, management of time is an important aspect. Many candidates had produced work which addressed all the Assessment Objectives in a considered and mature manner. The work produced reflected meaningful research, understanding, development, refinement and realisation.

Direct observational studies allowed candidates to explore fully the key elements of line, tone, colour, form and pattern using a range of media.

Digital photography was used by many candidates within their work. It was used effectively as a method of creating imagery for initial ideas.

Computer manipulation of images was also used by candidates effectively and at times creatively to modify, alter and adapt images as their work progressed.

Sketchbooks and Journals were used in centres to present the development of their work.

Graphic Media e.g. pencil, paint, chalks, oil pastels, pen and ink and colour pencils remained highly popular. The skill levels in the use of these media were of an exceptional standard in many candidates' work.

Textiles had been used by candidates in many centres to produce work e.g. embroidery, batik and tie dye.

Fashion Work remained popular and was viewed in many centres.

Print making including traditional and new technologies were used by candidates in many centres.

Centres which produced work using Ceramics primarily presented good quality and skilful responses in both 2 and 3 dimensions.

## Principal Moderator's Report

The Principal Moderator, Chief Examiner and moderation team would like to thank Boy's Model School, Belfast for their hospitality and co-operation during the 2015 Briefing Meetings for GCSE Art and Design moderators.

### Administration

The majority of centres had all documentation ready and accurately completed in preparation for the moderation process supporting moderators in carrying out their roles effectively.

CCEA provides a check list in the 'Instructions to Teachers' booklet to assist teachers in the preparation for their centre's moderation. Moderators have a great deal of work to do in a very short time and they are dependent on centres providing complete and accurate paperwork.

Inaccurate completion of paperwork still causes delays to the moderation process. This year has seen an increase in mathematical errors occurring in the addition of marks on Candidate Record Sheets and again in the transcribing of marks from the Candidate Record Sheets to the TAC1. It is important that all CRS's are signed and that the candidate number is recorded in the space provided.

Labelling art work, including the Task, is important. Blue CCEA labels are provided with the examination paper for this purpose. Centre labels are also acceptable.

In larger centres the use of a map to show the location of candidates' work is vital to the smooth running of the moderation process. Moderation runs with greater ease when work is displayed in one room or adjoining rooms rather than spread over 3 rooms on 2 floors.

The exhibition of work is primarily for the purposes of moderation and should be available, without unnecessary interruption, throughout the moderator's visit. It is not appropriate to have student's, technicians or others working in or coming in and out of the rooms where moderation is taking place.

Moderators continued this year again to ask for work outside of the sample. This is now standard procedure. Teachers understand and have welcomed the introduction of this additional rigour in the moderation process.

## Marking

The majority of centres have a good grasp of the assessment objectives and are within the acceptable range. Internal Standardisation is essential to ensure all candidates in the centre are marked to the same standard. On occasion, where this doesn't happen it can lead to centre adjustments impacting severely on the marks of some candidates. Where erratic marking is discovered the centre will be asked to re-mark all candidates in the centre and not just those in the computer generated sample.

There is a tendency in many centres to mark work leniently at the top levels and severely at the lower levels. Pushing marking to the edge of the acceptable range often leads to centres risking the centre marks for all candidates, such adjustments may have a significant impact on some final grades. A number of centres required adjustment this year.

Each teacher is entitled to a second opinion and re-moderation if they feel one is warranted.

A re-moderation may be requested for one or both units.

## Work Produced

There was evidence of excellent standards of work produced in terms of creativity, ideas and skill in many centres. Some candidates showed high levels of maturity and perception when processing their ideas in the development of their work. This was not evident, however, across all centres where there was a lack of individuality and clear signs of formulaic teaching. This restrictive approach in delivering the course often prevents an individual and more personal approach and eliminates the element of risk taking in the candidates' work. When candidates are given the opportunity to learn new techniques, use new materials and experience new processes which in turn informs their work, candidates work to their strengths and often develop fresh and innovative outcomes. Candidates who visited galleries and attended workshops gained inspiration which aided them in producing exciting outcomes. Where candidates in a class are all using the same contextual references the work produced can be very mundane and predictable.

## Addressing the Assessment Objectives

Not all Assessment Objectives are being addressed in a consistent manner in all centres.

Centres should ensure that candidates address all four assessment objectives. Candidates who fail to address all four assessment objectives do not have access to the full range of marks.

Attendance at Agreement Trials will help teachers to understand and learn how to apply the standard using the Matrix. A clear understanding of the standard will make marking easier and more accurate.

## Assessment Unit 1      The Core Portfolio (Controlled Assessment)

In some centres the amount of work produced exceeded that recommended by CCEA.

Quality is always more important than quantity particularly when work produced is done merely to decorate or fill pages. Assessment Objectives were generally well addressed, however in some centres assessment objectives one and two were not as well met.

Moderators noted that some excellent experimentation with a range of techniques deployed was not reflected in informing the candidates' work and in some cases had no bearing on the final outcome at all.

While there were examples of fashion design and textiles, ceramics, batik, and mixed media, the work in many centres was often exclusively 2D Fine Art, with very little 3D Fine Art and 3D design.

The imaginative use of contextual references was evident in an increasing number of centres though weaker candidates were often too dependent on the work of other artists simply copying rather than having it inform their own work in a creative manner. Photocopying artists' work and colouring in over the top is of limited value in developing skills and creativity.

The use of Photoshop is increasing each year, developing ideas in an imaginative way. Digital imagery is being used appropriately with some excellent animations this year.

The teaching of a range of drawing approaches is highly recommended.

Candidates whose inspiration for their work is personal, often find it easier to remain focused and committed to the development of their ideas and this often leads to a highly successful outcome.

## Assessment Unit 2      Working to a Stimulus

Teachers and candidates responded well to this year's stimulus 'My Space' and there was some outstanding, creative and skilful work presented in centres. Candidates embraced the theme and responded in very personal and original ways. It was evident that the paper appealed to boys and girls equally.

In the majority of many centres outcomes were mainly 2D Fine Art. Time constraints and confidence may well have influenced these choices. There were, however, some excellent examples of work by candidates that resulted in ceramic, textile and fashion outcomes.

It is part of the structure of the examination that candidates are required to start and complete their final response in a set 10 hour period. In many centres the preparatory work was often more detailed and stronger than the work produced in the 10 hour time frame and this is understandable. The purpose of the 10 hour period is to provide a level playing field for all candidates.

That being the case it must be noted that the standard and commitment of candidates, was very high. The support provided by teachers is commendable.

## Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

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